# VEDIC LECTURES

( Proceedings of the Summer School of Vedic Studies )

[ MAY-JUNE 1960 ]

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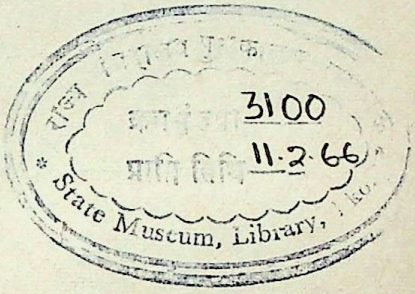


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## PREFACE

The thoughts contained in these Lectures are offered to those who are engaged in discovering the deeper meanings of symbolism, mythology and religion. The Vedas are a thesaurus of truths which are the laws on both the cosmic and the individual levels, that is, in the Universal and in Man. For the Western interpreter the Vedic problem is lost in the sands of a primitive religion bearing the load of blind myths. For the scholar in India there is a stalemate in which the words are important and not the meaning ; he feels no obligation towards the problem as to what the Ṛishis intended to convey as a consistent formulation of their thoughts The problem, however, cannot be left to such predilections, for the establishment of the new horizons of study in religion, mythology and symbolism on a world stage is offering infinite possibilities for interpreting the Mind of Man. The Vedas have assumed fresh significance calling for a re-assessment of the statements made about the Devas, in the context of creation at the three levels of Mind, Life and Matter, of which the composite and integrated pattern is Man.

Man is the Life-principle (*Prāṇa*).
Man is the Metabolic Fire (*Vaiśvānara Agnī*).
Man is processed in the mould of Time (*Saṁvatsara*).
Man is the arch-model of corporeal modality (*Prathama Paśu*).

Man is concretised Mind (*Mūrta Manas*).
Man is the child of the Universal Mothers (*Apāṁgarbha*).
Man is the measure of the Infinite (*Sahasrasya Prtimā*).

Man is the scion of the Collective Progenitor (*Vairāja Manu*).

Man is the harmony of the Cosmic Chant (*Udgītha*).

Man is the Divine Mystery and Will (*Yajña-Kratu*).

The spectral language of Vedic symbolism consists of many such images formed by the exploding intimations in the minds of the Seers.

This is the ground-work of our approach Man is the key to unlock the hidden secrets of the meaning behind the words The Ṛigveda is the most stupendous quest of the human mind to understand the cosmic mystery, the Supreme Law, the Ultimate Truth which holds good for all times and places. The Vedic formulation is wedded to a cult, namely Yajña, which in itself was apotheosized. Fortunately the material is abundant but seldom viewed with a unifying vision. The whole Indian tradition is like a big evolving commentary on the germs of thought in the Ṛigveda, with boundless accretions produced by the religious moulds through the ages. This accepted, the interpreter is expected to transcend the successive orbits in order to discern the seed and the tree. The future of understanding the Ṛigveda seems to lie in the hands of those who are engaged in inquiries concerning religious and mythological symbolism all over the world. To such the following pages are offered.

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# Lecture I

## Inauguration Announcement

On the lines of the Summer School of Linguistics, it was decided to hold a Summer School of Vedic Studies during the Summer Vacations in the Banaras Hindu University. With this aim the following announcement was issued on April 30, 1960 :—

### Summer School of Vedic Studies

### [ ग्रीष्मकालीन वैदिक ज्ञानसत्र ]

A Summer School of Vedic Studies will be held at the Banaras Hindu University during May-June 1960. Scholars interested in Vedic studies are invited kindly to attend the School. This will be the first session of its kind to be organised in India.

Its object is to focus attention on Vedic studies, specially on their traditional esoteric interpretation. Lectures and discourses will be held daily in the morning and afternoon. It is proposed to cover the following topics in the first instance :

| | |
|---|---|
| १. वैदिक त्रयीविद्या | ६. दैवासुरम् |
| २. अग्निविद्या | ७. प्रजापति |
| ३. सोमविद्या | ८. यज्ञ |
| ४. हृदयविद्या | ९. पुरुषसूक्त |
| ५. अश्वत्थविद्या | १०. नासदीयसूक्त |

Vedic studies ( वेदविद्या ), according to our view, essentially represents a metaphysical doctrine ( सृष्टिविद्या or प्रजापतिविद्या ) enunciated through the symbolism of Gods ( देवाः ) and Sacrifice ( यज्ञ ). Round this symboism has been built a consistent tradition in the great literatures of India through the ages—a *Philosophia Perennis* or सनातनीविद्या.

The aim of this Vedic School is to revive and reintroduce this tradition amongst the Vedic scholars of the present day. Members of the staff in the Vedic departments of the Universities and Colleges are specially requested kindly to take part in the School. Proceedings will be recorded & published.

The session will open on Wednesday May 25 ( वट सावित्री Day ) and close on Sunday June 5 ( गंगा दशहरा Day). Arrangement for free lodging of the guests will be made on behalf of the School. Members will pay for their own boarding, for which arrangements will be made in the University canteen.

V. S. AGRAWALA,
*Director.*

30th April, 1960.

Summer School of Vedic Studies,
Banaras Hindu University.
[Professor & Head of the
Dept. of Art & Architecture,
College of Indology, B.H.U.]

Accordingly the Proceedings began on May 25, 1960, the sacred Vaṭa-Sāvitrī Day, which in Vedic lore is associated with the Sāvitra-vidyā of god Savitā and in Puranic mythology with the story of Sāvitrī and Satyavān. What is Sāvitrī ? It is the solar energy that the Sun-god as the focal centre of the universe is radiating and which all living creatures are receiving as the unique principle of Life.

## *Setu-Sāma* [ सेतुसाम ]

Pt. Sumati Ram Nagar of Vārāṇasī recited in the beginning the Setu-sāma chant in the manner of the traditional Sāmavedins.

### मंत्र

अहमस्मि प्रथमजा ऋतस्य पूर्वं देवेभ्यो अमृतस्य नाम ।
यो मा ददाति स इदेवमावदहमन्नमन्नदन्तमद्मि ॥

### गान

स्वर्ग्यम्, सेतुषाम पुरुषगतिर्वा, विशोकं वा । प्रजापतिस्त्रिष्टुबात्मा ।

( १ )

हाउ हाउ हाउ
सेतूँ स्तर सेतूँ स्तर सेतूँ स्तर ।
दुस्तरान् दुस्तरान् दुस्तरान् ।
दानेनादानम् दानेनादानम् दानेनादानम् ।
हाउ हाउ हाउ ।
अहमस्मि प्रथमजा ऋता ऽ २३ स्या ऽ ३४५ ॥

( २ )

हाउ हाउ हाउ ।
सेतूँ ऽस्तर सेतूँ ऽस्तर सेतूँ ऽस्तर ।
दुस्तरान् दुस्तरान् दुस्तरान् ।
अक्रोधेन क्रोधम् । अक्रोधेन क्रोधम् । अक्रोधेन क्रोधम् ।
हाउ हाउ हाउ ।
पूर्वं देवेभ्यो अमृतस्य ना ऽ २३ मा ऽ ३४५

( ३ )

हाउ हाउ हाउ ।
सेतूँ ऽस्तर सेतूँ ऽस्तर सेतूँ ऽस्तर ।
दुस्तरान् दुस्तरान् दुस्तरान् ।
श्रद्धयाश्रद्धाम् श्रद्धयाश्रद्धाम् श्रद्धयाश्रद्धाम् ।
हाउ हाउ हाउ ।
यो मा ददाति स इदेवमा ऽ २३ वा ऽ ३४५ त् ।

( ४ )

हाउ हाउ हाउ ।
सेतूँ ऽस्तर सेतूँ ऽस्तर सेतूँ ऽस्तर ।
दुस्तरान् दुस्तरान् दुस्तरान् ।
सत्येनानृतम् सत्येनानृतम् सत्येनानृतम् ।
हाउ हाउ हाउ ।
अहमन्न मदन्तमा ऽ २३ ब्भी ३४५ ।
हाउ हाउ हाउ ।
एषा गतिः एषा गतिः एषा गतिः ।
एतदमृतम् एतदमृतम् एतदमृतम् ।

स्वर्गच्छ स्वर्गच्छ स्वर्गच्छ ।
ज्योतिर्गच्छ ज्योतिर्गच्छ ज्योतिर्गच्छ ।
सेतूँ_स्तीर्त्वा चतुरा २३४५ : ॥

The Setusāma is a chant in the Āraṇya Saṁhitā of the Sāmaveda (I. 9). The meaning of the stanza is:

'I' am the first-born of the Order ( ऋत ). Prior to the Gods, Immortality is my name. Who created me verily is my Protector: He eats me as his food; of Him I too eat a share.

'I' represents the individual being who is the same as the principle of Agni or Life on the plane of manifestation:

अग्निर्नः प्रथमजा ऋतस्य
(RV. X. 5.7)

This 'Individual' is immortal in its essence, but is also subject to Death, i.e. it becomes the food of the Cosmic Being. It however, preserves its individual existence by sharing in the nature of that Universal Being.

The Individual or अहं is bound in the shackles of Uncharity ( अदान ), Anger ( क्रोध ), Doubt ( अश्रद्धा ) and Faleshood ( अनृत ). He must cross these hurdles and conquer uncharity by generosity, anger by equanimity, doubt by faith and falsehood by truth. Constant practice of these vertues—viz. दान, अक्रोध, श्रद्धा and सत्य—

is essential to escape the bondage of matter, and attain to immortality, bliss and light—*Amṛitaṁ, Svaḥ, Jyotiḥ*. These are the highest spiritual ideals which constitute the eternal foundations of life in Man and life in the Cosmos.

There after Dr Agrawala requested PT. BALDEVA UPADHYAYA to inaugurate the Proceedings.

Pt. Upadhyaya said: The significance of the Vedas cannot be limited to the Indians only; their metaphysical value is universal. The Western scholars, however, insisted on a historical approach to the Vedas and devised the tools of comparative philology and comparative mythology as aids to the understanding of the language and thought of the Vedas. In our tradition Yāska, about eight centuries before Christ, had laid the foundation of philological approach, but with a view to probe into the depth of the inner meaning of the mantras. The Vedas specialise in metaphysical statements. For example, the Purusha Sūkta (RV. X. 90) does not describe any hydra-headed monster but glorifies the transcendent Creator in His absolute and universal forms. It was primarily the creational theme that was important in the eyes of the Vedic seers and that approach alone holds the key to the real meaning of such Sūktas as the Hiraṇyagarbha Sūkta, the Nāsadīya Sūkta, etc. Although removed from us in time the Vedas are still nourishing our culture as its life-sap.

We are conversant with three modes of expression, viz. *Svabhāvokti* or exact description found in the scientific treatises, *Atiśayokti* or hyperbolic style found in the Purāṇas, and *Rūpaka* or allegories and symbols as seen in Vedic mantras. For long the Vedas have remained sealed books, but now is propitious time to unlock their meanings.

PT AMBIKA PRASAD UPADHYAY spoke next and emphasized the doctrine of the Vedas being '*Śabda Brahma*' and the source of Dharma. The Brāhmaṇa literature has preserved the key to the Vedas and should be studied from that angle. We should be grateful to generations of Vedic scholars for preserving the texts of the Vedas, and now a time may come when the meaning also may be grasped.

DR B. L. ATREYA welcoming the idea of the Vedic School observed that a venture of this nature should have started with the foundation of the Hindu University, for the Vedas are the basis of this culture. They are not literary documents like others but the source of all knowledge, philosophy and religion. It is to be regretted that the points of view with respect to the Vedas inculcated by Swami Dayanand, Shri Aurobindo, and by Pt. Madhusudan Ojha are not studied and critically examined in the Universities. It is essential that the store of knowledge found in the Vedas, especially with respect to

cosmogony, should now be explained for many inquisitive scholars both in India and the West.

PT. BRAHMA DATTA JIJÑĀSU, Editor *Veda-Vāṇī*, expressed his appreciation of the idea of the Vedic School being organised in the Banaras Hindu University. It was an effort in the right direction to enrich our culture. We should not confine ourselves to the interpretations of Sāyaṇāchārya but take the help of earlier literature as found in the Brāhmaṇas, the Upanishads, and in the Vedic Saṁhitās themselves. The mantras should be examined for exegesis on three levels, viz. *Ādhyātmika*, *Ādhibhautika* and *Ādhidaivika*, just as Skandasvāmin has observed—

सर्वदर्शनेषु सर्वे मन्त्रा योजनीयाः ।

The Ādhyātmika plane has reference to the functioning of the life-force (Prāṇa) within the organism or the human body. The Ādhibhautika field includes society and human organisations, and the Ādhidaivika level refers to the inner and mysterious working of the Devas or divine Energy in its diverse manifestations through matter.

DR. V. S. AGRAWALA said that at the outset he wished to invoke the blessings of the late Pt. Madan Mohan Ji Malaviya whose spirit was present with them on the occasion to guide their deliberations on a subject which was so near and dear to his heart.

The Indian point of view about life and knowledge is neatly summed up in the Upanishadic saying : अनिराकरणं मेऽस्तु, i. e: 'let me not reject or discard anything of value, let my approach be constructive'. We may also apply this to our problem of Vedic interpretation. We welcome all the available evidence from any source, ancient or modern, and then apply our critical faculties to grasp the deep significance of the mantras in the wider context of cosmogony, as they were intended by the Ṛishis. The truth about the utterances of the Seers is that they wanted to convey a rational meaning and that the same must have been intelligible to their contemporaries. Distance of time may have rendered many things obscure, but originally the mantras were marked by clarity of meaning. When we now find them to be enigmatical it is due to our having lost the key to the definitions in which the mantras are couched.

DEVA AND BHŪTA—The second important fact about Vedic interpretation is that the hymns embody metaphysical statements of cosmogonic laws which hold good at different levels, especially with reference to the working of the Devas or Prāṇic energy and the working of the Bhūtas or gross matter. The distinction and inter-relation of the Devas and the Bhūtas must be constantly kept in mind to grasp the full meaning of the Vedic descriptions, specially the ritual of Yajña. The Devas represent Truth, Light

and Immortal Life ( सत्यं ज्योतिरमृतम् ). The Bhūtas or Asuras represent Untruth, Darkness and Death ( अनृतं तमः मृत्युः ). Life and Cosmos are the outcome of a struggle between the Devas and the Asuras. The Devas are headed by Indra and the Asuras by Vṛitra. The world is thus an unending picture of Daivāsuram, the conflict between the basal duality of the Devas and Asuras, or Light and Darkness, or Immortality and Death. This is the fundamental dichotomy of which the twin Mothers are Aditi and Diti, both symbolising the female powers of the Creator.

SYMBOLICAL MEANING OF THE MANTRAS—The third important point about our approach to Vedic exegesis is even more far-reaching. Every student of the Veda must remember that he is face to face with a language in which the lexical meanings are not material, but it is the symbolical meanings that are really important. The language of symbols is preferred because it is able to convey a much greater depth of meaning, and secondly because the symbols do not change in time or place. For example, the Cow as a symbol stands for motherhood, she typifies generation, the same quality as is found in Infinite Nature. Therefore the creative energy in the cosmos is easily conceived of as the Cow and is given various names like Aditi, the creatrix of the various divine powers on the plane of manifestation. Aditi is Nature herself and she is the mother of Gods (Devamātā). The Cow is also called

Viśvarūpā, the Omniform mother who creates out of her body the whole universe and all the creatures that be. She is Kāmadughā or Kāmadhenu, whose milk is Kāma or Prajāpati's desire to create. The whole world is spoken of as the 'Wish-fulfilling Sacrifice' (*Kāmapra yajña*) of the Supreme Being, and that creative process is taking material shape through the agency of Nature who is verily conceived of as the Cosmic Cow. The principal sign of motherhood or creativity in the cow is the quality of giving milk after she calves. Milk therefore also becomes a symbol of the creative potency that is omnipresent in nature. Motherhood is conceived of as the conversion of water into milk, the latter having millions of tiny globules of butter which water has not. Butter or *Ghṛita* is thought of as the symbol of the fecundating seed, or the male principle which fertilises the female. For example, when the Ṛigveda says 'घृतेन पृथिवी व्युद्यते (I. 164. 47) and we translate it as 'the earth is moistened with fatness' (Griffith) we may be correct so far as the word-meaning is concerned, but we hardly touch the fringe of the real meaning which is concealed behind the symbolism of *Ghṛita. Gauḥ, Payaḥ, Ghṛitam* are repeated hundreds of times in the Ṛigveda covering a vast and significant symbolism and one should be prepared to extract the maximum connotation of these definitive terms. As is well known, water thrown on the fire puts it out, but butter enkindles it ; therefore *Ghṛita* is spoken of as a form of

Agni ; for example 'This butter is thy body, O shining Agni' ( एषा ते शुक्र तनूः, Yajur. 4. 17), or 'The butter is thy dear abode, O Agni' ( एतद्वा अग्नेः प्रियं धाम यद् घृतम्, TB. 1.1.9.6 ; also TS. 6.1.7.1 ; आग्नेयं वै घृतम्, ŚB. 7. 4. 1.41). Agni is the creative seed of Prajāpati and so is *Ghṛita*, the symbol *par exaellence* of the parental seed that deposits the germ of life in the womb.

The Vedic symbols are numerous. The Sun, Ocean, Fire, Sky, Earth, Water, Mountain, River, Dawn, Night, Air, Bird, Animal, Tree, Forest, etc. have been employed as symbols, forming the alphabet, as it were, of a rich language designed to convey the imagery of the cosmos. Indeed each created object, whether made by nature or man, can be made the symbol of a meaning that is inherent in its working. This language is writ large on the face of nature and can be read at all times and places. Father, Mother, Brother, Sister, Son, Daughter are the code-words of a universal dictionary. The seers made use of this language by deliberate intention. Its golden radiance fills all space between earth and sky and a new experience of ecstasy filled the minds of the thinkers at the potency of this omnipresent medium of expression.

VEDIC METAPHYSICS A COHERENT STATEMENT— The laws of nature are patent to us in the workings of the created objects. Each object is a symbol, sign or pointer of some truth ; it is like a ray of the

Sun-God who is being illumined by all his bright rays—

देवं वहन्ति केतवः (RV. I. 50.1).

The basic truth of Vedic interpretation is the fact that there is a coherent system of metaphysics which was real to the poets and which has found expression in a consistent terminology. The hymns are rooted in a well developed fabric of cosmogonic definitions and their truth can be demonstrated by stringent logic and stern dialectic. We are face to face with superior minds who well knew what they said, provided we on our part correctly understand their technique and methodology and remain honest in our investigation by looking at the evidence as one-whole and not as the piece-meal outpourings of inchoate minds.

MAHĪ MĀTĀ—For example, *Mahī Mātā*, the Great Mother, *Magna Mater*, has always one and the same connotation, viz. Aditi, Mother of the Gods, who is Infinite Nature itself. Originally she is one, but in creation she transforms herself into seven to manifest her sevenfold power as her Seven Sons, viz. Mind, Life and the Five Elements of Matter (*sapta-putrā*). When it is said in the Ṛigveda that the Mothers weave garments for their offspring (वस्त्रा पुत्राय मातरो वयन्ति, RV. I. 47. 6), we find ourselves fully in the hands of a symbolical language and we must discover the true meaning of *vastra*, *putra* and *mātaraḥ*. Yajña is the garment woven for the Babe and being knit with

seven threads, viz. *Manas*, *Prāṇa* and *Pañcha-Bhūtas*, is called *Sapta-tantu*. Each body, from the macrocosm to the microcosm, is organised as a Yajña and at the centre of each is a Babe called Sūrya or Agni or Madhya Prāṇa, i.e. the Life-principle, which also has the variant name of Indra. The above unity of symbols ceases to baffle if the principle of Prāṇa-vidyā is correctly grasped. No organism can subsist or function unless the three states of consciousness, viz. the physical, vital and psychic, are integrated. These constitute the Seven Threads of the robe that is the body and which is the object of the elaborate symbolism of Yajña.

YAJÑA AND SŪRYA—Yajña implies the worship of the Deva through the agency of the Bhūtas. Sūrya is at the centre of its system and being the archetype of a Yajña is the model of the Deva functioning on the plane of physical manifestation. The physical sun, like our earth, is made of material elements, but the mantras speak of it as the symbol of the Supernal Sun, the Immortal Divine Being who imples the whole universe and is worshiphed as प्राणः प्रजानामुदयत्येषं सूर्यः, and

सूर्य आत्मा जगतस्तस्थुषश्च (RV. I. 115.1.).

The sun symbolises the emergence of a centre or focal point in the womb of the Universal. It typifies the principle of individuation. The Individual in the lap of the Universal is creation and a Yajña. The Yajña is spoken of as the navel or centre to give

effect to the principle of becoming (cf. अयं यज्ञो भुवनस्य नाभिः, RV. I. 164. 35). Where there is a centre there is a *maṇḍala* enclosing an organised system. The *nābhi* and the *maṇḍala*, i.e. the centre and the circumference go hand in hand, they form an integral part of the same circle and the one becomes the other. The *maṇḍala* as the circumference signifies bounded space or limitation; it typifies the principle of finitisation, or sheathing, or covering, which in other words is called a robe or garment. Therefore the Sun-God is known as *Vivasvān*, its light-giving rays forming as it were a garment, or a golden cloak in so far as they extend. The texture of this cloth is made of seven threads of which not only the sun but all organisms are constituted. Life, Mind, and the Five Elements of Matter are the Seven Threads of each Yajña, in which the Life-Principle has its abode and which is thus basically threefold (इमं नो अग्न उप यज्ञमेहि पञ्चयामं त्रिवृतं सप्ततन्तुम्, RV. X. 124. 1). The knowledge of these three is the Trayī Vidyā or the triple lore of the Vedas which is the foundation on which the edifice of Vedic metaphysics and exegesis rests. Sūrya is the foremost symbol of this triple lore and therefore was it said by the ancient seers—सैषा त्रयी विद्या तपति (Ś B. 10. 52. 1. 2). Sūrya is the self of all that moves and moves not, and the self (*ātman*) consists of speech, mind and breath (एतन्मयो वा अयमात्मा वाङ्मयो मनोमयः प्राणमयः, ŚB XIV. 4.3,10 = BU. 1.5.3).

Here breath (*Prāṇa*), stands for Life and speech (*Vāk*) for all the five material elements ranging from the sky to the earth, as explained in this very context—'Of Vāk the earth is the body. As far as Vāk extends, so far extends the earth' (तस्यैव वाचः पृथिवी शरीरं..... यावत्येव वाक् तावती पृथिवी, BU. 1.5.11). The Sun-God as the archetypal creation is comprised of the triple entities Mind, Life and Matter, and is therefore taken to be the symbol of three Vedas, the three worlds, and of the other triads manifest in creation.

The significance of Sūrya as the arch-symbol of Vedic thought cannot be over-emphasised : 'Of what is and has been and is to be, and of what moves and is stationary,—of all this some regard the Sun alone to be the origin and the cause of dissolution. Both of what is not and what is, this is the source, the real Prajāpati ; he is the eternal Brahman which is at once imperishable and the object of speech. The Sun having divided himself into three, abides in these worlds, causing all the gods in due order to rest in his rays. Verily Agni as the Sun abides in three forms in the three worlds that have come into being ; the seers adore him with songs as manifested under three names'[1]

१. भवद्भूतस्य भव्यस्य जंगमस्थावरस्य च ।
अस्यैके सूर्यमेवैकं प्रभवं प्रलयं विदुः ।। १।६१
असतश्च सतश्चैव योनिरेषा प्रजापतिः ।
यदक्षरं च वाच्यं च यथैतद्ब्रह्म शाश्वतम् ।। २।६२

Sūrya is the symbol of triune manifestation and is in the Vedic language a *Trivṛit Yajña*, identified with both Agni and Indra as stated in the Brihad-devatā : 'Because, taking up fluids with his rays, accompanied by Vāyu, he rains upon the world, he is termed Indra. Agni in this (world), Indra and Vāyu in the middle, Sūrya in heaven, are here to be recognized as the three dieties.'[1]

MEANING OF VAṬA SĀVITRĪ—We have alluded in the beginning to the sacred Vaṭa-Sāvitrī day on which we are meeting. It is primarily illustrative of the symbolism of Savitā or Sūrya and his power Sāvitrī. The beautiful legend of Sāvitrī and Satyavān is an example of how the builders of Indian civilisation were working on four fronts. Firstly we have the cosmic existence of the Sun-God and his great energy that is the sustaining power of all living creatures. It is an *ādhidaivika* phenomenon true in all places and

कृत्वैष हि त्रिधात्मानमेषु लोकेषु तिष्ठति ।
देवान्यथायथं सर्वान् निवेश्य स्वेषु रश्मिषु ।। १।६३
एतद् भूतेषु लोकेषु अग्निभूतं स्थितं त्रिधा ।
ऋषयो गीर्भिरर्चन्ति व्यञ्जितं नामभिस्त्रिभिः ।। १।६४
(बृहद्देवता)

१. रसान् रश्मिभिरादाय वायुनायं गतः सह ।
वर्षत्येष च यल्लोके तेनेन्द्र इति स स्मृतः ।। १।६८
अग्निरस्मिन्नथेन्द्रस्तु, मध्यतो वायुरेव च ।
सूर्यो दिवीति विज्ञेयस्तिस्र एवेह देवताः ।। १।६९

times. Secondly we find a statement of this cosmic truth in the Vedic hymns which eulogise Savitā as the Impeller of all creation and as the source of universal life distributing its energy amongst all creatures. Thirdly the Purāṇas have woven a beautiful legend out of it under the name of Sāvitrī Upākhyāna and fourthly it is made the occasion of an annual festival on the Vaṭa-Sāvitrī day when a fast is kept and the story repeated. Whatever is possessed of power is a type of Savitā-Sāvitrī duality, of which twelve illustrative pairs are cited in the Jaiminīya Upanishad Brāhmaṇa, e.g. :—

| | सविता | सावित्री |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | मनस् | वाक् |
| 2. | अग्निः | पृथिवी |
| 3. | वायुः | अन्तरिक्षं |
| 4. | आदित्यः | द्यौः |
| 5. | चन्द्रमाः | नक्षत्राणि |
| 6. | अहः | रात्रिः |
| 7. | उष्णं | शीतं |
| 8. | अभ्रं | वर्षा |
| 9. | स्तनयित्नुः | विद्युत् |
| 10. | प्राणः | अन्नं |
| 11. | वेदाः | छन्दांसि |
| 12. | यज्ञः | दक्षिणा |

The two functioning as positive and negative, or as male and female, enter into union, as it were, to

extend the chain of creative energy, and this union is conceived of as a Yajña :

यज्ञो वै प्रचोदयति स्त्री चैव पुरुषश्च प्रजनयतः (JUB. 4.28.3).

In other words this is the mating of Agni and Soma, an essential feature of all procreative activity. Śiva and Satī typify clash between Agni and Soma, and Śiva and Pārvatī their amity.

SĀVITRĪ AND SATYAVĀN—In the Puranic story Satyavān represents the Sun and Sāvitrī his power. Sūrya is called *satya-sava* (RV. V. 81.7), *satya-dharmā* (RV. X. 139.3). Sūrya floating in the ocean of Ṛita, is the emergent centre of Satya : What the fair-fingered God creates on the wide earth and in the high heaven, that is his Satya ( सत्यमस्य तत्, RV. IV. 54.4). Sūrya is thus both Satya-Nārāyaṇa and Yajña-Nārāyaṇa for Satya and Yajña are synonymous. Sūrya is the Horse of the cosmic Aśvamedha ( एष वाऽ अश्वमेधो य एष सूर्यः तपति, ŚB. 10.6.5.8). Satyavān is described as being fond of horses, making equine figurines in clay and drawing them, for which he earned the epithet *Chitrāśva.*[1] Secondly Satyavān is fated to survive only for one year after his marriage with Sāvitrī unless she redeems him from the curse. This has reference to the annual renovation of Sūrya, his symbolical immolation in the

[1] बालस्याश्वाः प्रियाश्चास्य करोत्यश्वांश्च मृन्मयान् ।
चित्रेऽपि च लिखत्यश्वांश्चित्राश्च इति चोच्यते ।।
आरण्यकपर्व, Poona, 278.13

previous Aśvamedha and preparation for the next. Yama, the god of death, symbolises the terrific aspect of the life-principle which is destructive ( घोर प्राणाग्नि ); it must be propitiated and made auspicious ( अघोर शिव ) and this is what Sāvitrī does. In the folk-lore version of this story as recited on the Karaka-Chaturthī day, the prince is bitten by a snake, the symbol of death, and the princess brings him back to life through the intercession of the Seven Divine Mothers (*Sapta-Mātṛi-kā* or *Sapta-svasāraḥ*), of whom the eldest (*Mahī Mātā* Aditi) is in possession of the elixir of immortality.

The symbolical approach to Vedic interpretation alone is thus adequate to take note of the total evidence as available on these several levels. It is the object of this School to explain and emphasize the technique and method of this approach. Even partial success with this method is likely to be the harbinger of great fruit. We should not lose sight of the basic fact that Veda-vidyā is Sṛishṭi-vidyā, and the latter is elaborated under several names and forms like Agni-vidyā, Prajāpati-vidyā, Saṁvatsara-vidyā, Deva-vidyā, Yajña-vidyā, Chhando-vidyā, Paśu-vidyā, etc. These involve a mass of technical details and definitions which should be cleared to pave the way for a rational understanding of this literature.

# Lecture II

## TRAYĪ-VIDYĀ

THE TRIKA BASIS OF VEDIC THOUGHT—The esoteric doctrine known as the Trayī-Vidyā goes to the root of the Vedic symbolism as exemplified in the triad of creation. The Triple *Vedas*, the Three *Devas*, the Three Fires, the Three *Lokas*, and also the Three *Guṇas* of later philosophy constitute the pattern of Trinity which is fundamental to all Vedic Thought. It is well known that the Vedas are reckoned as three—*Ṛig*, *Yajus* and *Sāma*, and at times as four including the *Atharva*. Looking historically, some make it a point of controversy, but such an approach is unreal. There is a distinction between the symbolism of Three and of Four as applied to the Veda, the meaning of which has to be grasped in order to realise the significance of the Three and Four Vedas. When they point to the triple Vedas or *Trayī-Vidyā*, it is not their intention to speak of the texts as we have them. It is, in fact, the triple nature of the cosmos in its primary source which is known as the *Veda-Vidyā* or the *Chhando-Vidyā*. *Gāyatrī*, *Triṣhṭup* and *Jagatī* are the three metres symbolising the *Ṛig Veda*, the *Yajur Veda* and the *Sāma Veda*. The cosmos is conceived of as a *Yajña* in which the Creator Himself has

offered in order to mirror His Totality in the Trinitarian Manifestation of the sacrifice, of the Yajña. This Yajña is compared to the Milk or Life-sap emanating from its unmanifest source in Prajāpati, who is the same as Yajña. What he did was to establish at the outset a plan or design as the architectural basis of his creation. This was a three-fold formulation, viz. three principles, three forces and three worlds. The one became three, as Manu has put it succinctly :—

अग्निवायुरविभ्यस्तु त्रयं ब्रह्म सनातनम् ।
दुदोह यज्ञ सिद्धयर्थमृग्यजुःसामलक्षणम् ॥ (1.23)

What actually happened is that *in principio* Brahma was one without a second in his transcendent form. He becomes three (*Trayam Brahma*), in order to create manifest forms. These three are symbolical of the triple nature or the three principles underlying the thought of the Creator, which are termed as *Rig, Yajus* and *Sāma.* Veda is knowledge or thought or idea which exists in the mind of Prajāpati. The creation is the thought of its maker. Thus the one individual knowledge or wisdom was transformed into three and that became the source of the Triad, i.e. in the cosmos at every level and at all times. The three Vedas are correlated to the three divine powers named Agni, Vāyu and Āditya. Each one of them becomes manifest in time-space relata, spoken of as the three worlds and the Three Steps of Vishṇu in which time is

measured. This measuring out is the result of movement or motion as it becomes manifest against the substratum of rest. The Veda as the basic principle stands for stasis, that is, the principle of rest in which all the powers of manifest creations have their source. It is from this point of view that the creation is said to be the outcome of the three Vedas. Agni, Vāyu and Āditya typify the three dynamic principles or the triad of Prāṇa in which Veda or the Mind of the Creator manifests itself in order to create the material form or descend to the level of matter. The visible worlds have their source in the invisible (*Avyakta, Avyaya*) which is also known as the unborn (*Aja*). The worlds are created by *Rajas* which is the same as motion (*Kshobha*). Agitation, vibration, movement, impelling, measuring, stepping, kindling—these and many other terms point to one and the same principle, viz. motion or the dynamic release of the process of contraction and expansion from a source which is at rest. Duality is the very life-breath of manifest force or activity, poetically spoken of as the two wings of a soaring bird, or the two wheels of a moving chariot, or the two horses yoked to a car. Motion is the same as awakening (*Jāgaraṇa, Agnir jāgāra*) and rest is the same as sleep (*Nidrā*). Force can become manifest only in a dual aspect spoken of as hot and cold (*Ghraṁsa* and *Hima, Atharva*). While speaking graphically of the existence of cosmic tree, it is said

to have its root in *Ūrdhva* and its branches as *Adhaḥ*. These are not spatial conceptions but the former stands for the unmanifest and the latter for the manifest, i.e. rest and motion respectively. In Ṛig Veda (I.164.10) the *Ūrdhva* is said to stand erect as the support of the three mothers and three fathers, i.e. three sets of universal parents, essential for creating the three forms (*Viśvarūpya*) of Mind, Life and Matter, which correspond to the Multiplicity of Triads.

HṚIDAYA OR CENTRE—The *Ūrdhva* is the non-dimensional centre, without length, without breadth and without thickness. This is called *Hṛidya* or *Nabhya*, viz. the immortal and unmanifest source. The absolute arithmatical point offers an appropriate illustration of this idea. The axiomatic point is beyond the conception of any measurement but the geometrical centre of the circle is the hypothetical point which has, of necessity, three dimensions, length, breadth and thickness. It is a miracle that the formless point assumes a form which gives birth to the line, the surface and the cube. The unmanifest point is the vitalising principle behind the manifest, whereas the manifest is mortal because it is conditioned, the unmanifest is spoken of as immortal, which is not conditioned by space and time. When it is said that the divine principle abides in the Heart (*Hṛidaya*;

*Hṛiddeśa*, *Gītā*, 15.15, 18.61), the reference is not to the particular organ for pumping blood, but that organ is made the symbol of the vital life source of both the microcosm and the macrocosm.

As is well known, the centre of a circle becomes its diameter by a succession of points and similarly the radii pointing in all directions constitute innumerable points of the circumference or the enclosing *maṇḍala* of the circle. The three are intimately related. There are two features to be specially noted; firstly, the diameter is the result of the principle of motion in the point released by it on its two sides, and secondly the circumference is the boundary or the enclosing principle which sets a limit to the extension of the diameter. The implication is that movement is two-fold; centrifugal, i.e., outwards and centripetal, i.e. inwards. This extrovert and introvert motion (*Gati* and *Āgati*) belongs to the centre. Both of these have their substratum in the hypothetical point, which is at rest. Thus it is justifiable to conceive of the invisible point as being both static and dynamic. The existence of both rest and motion in a common source is conceived of as *Yajus*. This is an important statement which the Brāhmaṇa writers make at several places, namely, that the Sanskrit word *Yajus* is composed of two elements, *Yat* and *Jūs*. *Yat* from the root '*Yā*' to go, is taken as the symbol of *Vāyu*, i. e. movement and *Jūs* as the symbol of *Ākāśa* which is present every-

where and, therefore, rightly taken as the symbol of rest. This is a cryptic way of creating a symbol language which was freely employed by the Ṛishis. Thus the centre represents *Yajurveda*. The manifest form created out of the invisible manifest source by the principle of *Gati*, is termed as the *Yājusha Purusha*, which is the same as the *Chākshusha Purusha*, i.e. the Visible Man or Man in the Eye, or, in simple words, the created material form brought into existence by the principle of motion.

It should be noted that the visible centre, the diameter and the circumference all exist at one and the same time without priority in time ; as soon as we conceive of a visible point it must have some diameter, and thereby a circumference. The value of a circle does not depend on its sides. It is comprised of four constituent angles, each of 90°, and that is spoken of as the Perfect Circle or the *Chakra* of Vishṇu :—

चतुर्भिः साकं नवतिं च नामभिश्चक्रं न वृत्तं व्यतीँरवीविपत् ।
बृहच्छरीरो विमिमान ऋक्वभिर्युवाकुमारः प्रत्येत्याहवम् ॥
(RV. I. 155. 6.)

The same is true of all manifest forms having a centre whether they are small or vast in dimension ; both *Aṇu* and *Mahat* have the same value so long as both are vitalised by a similar immortal centre. All the divine qualities are aggregated in the centre, i.e. in the heart of each individual creature.

The transformation of the point as diameter and circle is spoken of as *Vitāna*, or *Vimāna*, a measuring out, from the root '*Mā*' to measure, and this is true of each Yajña which is measured out both in space and depth by the divine principle which is the Immortal Centre or *Hṛidaya*, or *Īśvara* or *Deva*, viz., the Presiding Deity of the Yajña. The centre at rest is the symbol of *Rasa* or bliss and the same in motion becomes typical of *Bala* or force. Wherever there is force there is friction or exhaustion, or depth, or disintegration, but the restful centre is beyond friction or depth, and, therefore, it is said to be *Amṛita* (*Amṛitasya Nābiḥ*) and the force imprisoned within it does not disintegrate ( तस्य नाक्षस्तप्यते भूरिभारः सनादेव न शीर्यते सनाभिः, RV., I.164, 13). The power of the centre creates forms. The process is spoken of as a rotation of the wheel by which forms are measured out, i.e. the diameter with its circumference is created. The form is spoken of in the Brāhmaṇas as *Mūrti*. Thus we get two principles, viz. the power or motion in the centre typified as *Yajus* and its becoming manifest as diameter, i.e. *Ṛik*. Yajus is *Gati* and *Ṛik* is *Mūrti*. This definition is emphatically given in the Brāhmaṇas—

ऋचा मूर्तिर्याजुषी गतिः साममयन्तेजः, GB. 1.2.1
ऋग्भ्यो जातां सर्वशो मूर्तिमाहुः सर्वा गतिर्याजुषी हैव शश्वत्।
सर्वं तेजः सामरूप्यं ह शश्वत् सर्वं वेदं ब्रह्मणा हैव सृष्टम्॥
TB. 3.12.9.1

As soon as *Ṛik* or form is created, the circumscribing principle of limitation is at once implied. This principle of circumscribing is the *Maṇḍala* symbolised as *Sāma*. Each radiating light creates round it a *Tejo-Maṇḍala* or *Sāma Maṇḍala*. It is thus evident that *Yajus*, *Ṛik* and *Sāma* which are the essential components of the Three Principles are essential for manifest creation. The Vedic poets employed their special terminology ; for example, they speak of the *Yajus* or centre as *Madhya Prāṇa* and identify it with Indra, i.e. the vital force kindled at the centre, which becomes responsible for creating a visible material form. They clearly state that the vital centre (*Madhya Prāṇa*), because of its quality of expansion and contraction, which is the same as the kindling of fire, esoterically becomes *Indha* which is the same as Indra by the technique of symbolical expression. This Indra is said to move in a chariot having two horses which are *Ṛik* and *Sāma*--ऋक्सामे वै हरी, AB. 2. 24, TB. 1.6.3.9 ( इन्द्रस्य ) ऋक्सामे वै हरी, ŚB. 4.4.3.6. ऋक्सामाभ्यां प्र रथं वर्तयन्ति, RV. X. 114.6. It is impossible to explain otherwise the significance of *Ṛik* and *Sāma* as the two Bay Steeds of Indra's Car. Each created form is a chartiot, because it is the outcome of movement of the motion released by the centre, i.e. Indra by means of his twin horses which are yoked to the chariot, viz. the duality of force, i.e. centripetal and centrifugal, that moves away from the centre and

then reaching its limit of the circumference rebounds to the centre. This dual movement creates a rhythm of creative or regulated motion which is the chief sign of Yajña or Motion that is not anarchic or destructive. The oscillation of the force from the positive to the negative and vice-versa results in the building of life or fruitful action. Energy which is uncontrolled, unharnessed and a challenge to regulation destroys and disintegrates, but that which submits to the control of a centre is channelled into constructive activity. Thus *Ṛik* and *Sāma* serve the useful purpose of making Indra, the manifest Deity of each Yajña. This is the measuring out of a Yajña. Each Yajña is the symbol of *Trayī-vidyā.*

The dynamic aspect of *Ṛik* in giving extension to the centre is spoken of as *Ṛikva,* i.e. centre is measured out by the principle of *Ṛik,* or as it is said in the Ṛig Veda that Vishṇu in His Dwarf Incarnation becomes cosmic or assumes gigantic form by the power of *Ṛikva* which means by taking three steps.

The principle of the three steps is the same as that of Triple Motion by which the three worlds are created corresponding to a host of other Triads. The key note of all of them is the motion inherent in the centre becoming manifest as *Ṛik* or *Ṛikva.*

There is also the question of the relationship between the diameter and the circumference, i. e.

between the *Ṛik* and the *Sāma*. It is a well known axiom that the circumference is thrice its diameter ; similarly, the *Sāma* is thrice the *Ṛik* (*Trichaṁ Sāma*). Whenever the *Sāma* is to be chanted it must be based on a *Ṛik* ( ऋच्यध्यूढं साम गीयते ). It has been said above that *Ṛik* is the principle of motion or extension and *Sāma* that of limitation. The former is conceived of as the power of Deva who stands for *Gati* or release, and the latter for Asura, who stands for limitation, holding up, seizing or bondage. Varuṇa as the king of Asuras has bonds (*Pāśas*) in his hands whereas Indra holds the Thunder Bolt which rends or cleaves through all bondage and releases the pent up cows, the cow symbolising *Gati* or Motion. One may here understand why the relationship between the number of Devas and Asuras is that of One is to Three. The Devas are said to be 33 and the fortified citadels of the Asuras as 99, and Indra is spoken of as the destroyer of the 99 forts of the Asuras. (RV. 2.19.6.). The Three Vedas thus represent an integrated system of triple forces, namely, Rest and Movement in its two-fold aspect, viz. *Gati* and *Āgati*. These three are respectively spoken of as the three deities, namely, Brahmā Indra and Vishṇu.

TRIAD OF FORCES—Brahmā is typical of rest (*Pratishṭhā*) ( ब्रह्मास्य सर्वस्य प्रतिष्ठा). Indra and Vishṇu co-exist as friends as said in the Rig Veda ( इन्द्रस्य युज्यः सखा, RV. I. 22.19). wherever there is Indra,

Vishṇu remains with him. The pair is inseparable. They are two sides of the same medal. Indra is Agni and Vishṇu is Soma. Against the substratum of rest, the centrifugal and centripetal forces or the outward and inward movements have their interplay. This is conceived of as a conflict pattern. Indra pushes out energy away from the centre. Vishṇu sends the same back to the same point. This principle of the balance between the two forces is significantly said in the Ṛig Veda—both are victors, none accepts defeat, neither of these was ever defeated by the other. O Vishṇu, Thou and Indra entered into rivalry thereby you were able to create Three Thousands.[1]

Here Indra and Vishṇu conflict has no relation with any cult priority, but it is the enunciation of an important creative principle, which brings into existence the triple pattern of the cosmos. What those Three Thousands are may be explained as the Thousand Heads, Thousand Eyes and Thousand Feet of a single *Purusha*, who is originally one but creates three centres for the sake of manifestation. The one point becomes tri-centric. The Brāhmaṇa texts explain these Three Thousand as *Veda-Sāhasrī*, *Loka-Sāhasrī* and *Vāk-Sāhasrī*. Here *Veda* has reference to the principle of mind, *Loka* to that of *Prāṇa*, and *Vāk*

[1] उभा जिग्यथुर्न परा जयेथे न परा जिग्ये कतरश्चनैनोः ।
इद्रश्च विष्णो यदपस्पृधेथां त्रेधा सहस्रं वि तदैरयेथाम् ॥ RV. I.69.8

to that of Matter. These are the three forms made manifest by Indra and Vishṇu. The Veda or *Chhandas* or Ṛishi refers to the principle of Stasis; The *Lokas* to activity or movement, or what is called *Rajas* (इमे वै लोका रजांसि, V S. 11.6, Ś B. 6.1.18). and *Vāk* or matter, the principle of inertia which results in friction to the outgoing force. The worlds are conceived of so many particles of dust stirred into motion which the rapid foot movements of dancing God made to splash into space (अत्रावो नृत्यतामिव तीव्रो रेणुरजायत) RV. 10. 72.6).

Basically, the Triad of forces abides in the centre. They are known as the three *Akshara Devatās*—Brahmā, Indra and Vishṇu or Rest and Movement in its two-fold aspect. There is no contradiction involved in speaking of the centre as being the repository of both Stasis and Motion. In the unmanifest state every thing is at rest, i.e. all forces are merged in a state of complete equilibrium, but as soon as the equilibrium is disturbed, forces begin to emanate in particular directions but they cannot cancel the focal point or the centre of gravity from which they start. This is exactly the nature of the absolute point and the manifest centre of the circle. The three deities are components of a single system. They are spoken of as three brothers and each one is essential for the creation of forms.

HṚIDAYA—In the cryptic symbolical language the centre named *Hṛidaya* comprises three syllables, viz. *Hṛi*, *Da* and *Yam*. They stand for the above three forces as follows:

(1) *Hṛi*, that which brings in, i.e. the centripetal force by which energy flows towards the centre; Vishṇu, (from the root हृ आहरणे).

(2) *Da*, the force which takes energy away from the centre, namely, the centrifugal force; Indra, (from the root दो अवखण्डने to break or disrupt).

(3) *Yaṁ*, that which regulates or controls the above two forces; viz. *Sthiti* or *Pratishṭhā*, i. e. rest, Brahmā.

Such is the balance of forces in each centre. This is the *Hṛidaya Vidyā*, or *Nābhi Vidyā*, or *Akshara Vidyā*, by which all visible forms are produced and governed. This is essentially the Trayī-Vidyā symbolised as the three *Vedas*, *Trayaṁ Brahma*, and the three Devas, namely, Agni, Vāyu and Āditya, or the three *Prāṇas*, or the three *Purushas*, etc.. Each entity where these three forces are operative is a *Pura*, which, although one, is integrated with the *Tri-Puras*, namely, Three Cities. The legend gives it as the name of an Asura, who was master of the three cities of gold, silver and copper. So long as the cities were separate from each other the Asura played

havoc, i.e. their powers were colliding, conflicting and cancelling each other; but God Śiva pierced the three cities of Tripura with one shaft and thereby conquered him. The moral of this story is plain enough, namely that the triple forces of rest and movement must become balanced and integrated to a system in order to become creative and fruitful, i.e. their *Āsuric* aspect is replaced by the Divine Yajña.

RAJAS OR MOTION AS CREATIVE PRINCIPLE—According to the Vedas, all creation is the result of *Gati* or movement or *Rajas*, which is spoken of as Black and White (*Kṛishṇa*, *Śukla*). The black is the symbol of rest or sleep and the white of motion or awakening, or consciousness. This is a dual or relative process described as the process of expansion and contraction which is the chief characteristic of the Life-principle (प्राणो वै समञ्चनप्रसारणम्, ŚB. 8.14.10). It is also described as Coming and Going (ऐति च प्रेति च, AB.15.16); both being referred to in the Yajurveda (—प्रेत्या एत्यै स चाञ्च प्र च सारय, VS. 27.45). The light that is in heaven is also in each individual centre. It is the splendour of life of which the inbreath and the outbreath (*Prāṇa* and *Apāna*) are the two dominant deathless symbols (अंतश्चरति रोचनास्य प्राणादपानती, RV. X. 189.2). This dual process is the same as that called *Yajus*, viz. rest and motion related to each other. That which is created by *Yajus* is the *Yājusha Purusha*. The whole cosmos is the *Yājusha Purusha* and so is

each individual, namely, the person created by the twin principles of *Yajus*, namely, the rhythm of *Prāṇa* and *Apāna*. Cosmisation is rhythmisation. This one law reigns supreme over all space and time. It is the primeval principle of creation. It is, therefore, that the Ṛishis speak of the Trayī-Vidyā as the supreme source of manifestation. When this Trayī-Vidyā is kindled, creative chain action becomes released.

MIND AND MATTER AS TWO LEVELS OF CREATION—The nature of Trayī-Vidyā is said to be *Tapas*, kindling, burning of Fire which is but another name of the principle of *Prāṇa* ( तपो वाऽग्निः, ŚB. 3. 4. 3. 2, तदग्निर्वै प्राणः, JUB. 4. 22, प्राणो वाऽअग्निः, ŚB. 2. 2. 2. 15), and is the same as Prajāpati. The cosmos may be compared to the building of the fire-altar or Yajña in which Agni Prajāpati offered himself as *āhuti*. Although variously spoken of, the basic idea is the same. In the Purusha Sūkta it is stated that the cosmos is a *Sarvahut Yajña*, i. e. a divine act in which the Creator offered his total personality. Out of this sacrifice of Prajāpati, emanated creation at two levels, namely, Mind and Matter or Idea and Form. In the terminology of the Vedas the Idea is called Veda and the Form is *Paśu* or animal. The three Vedas are *Ṛig*, *Sāma* and *Yajus*. These are all the *Chhandas*, or metrical utterances and forms of transcendent *Vāk*.

तस्माद्यज्ञात्सर्वहुतः संभृतं पृषदाज्यम् ।
पशूंस्तांश्चक्रे वायव्यानारण्यान्ग्राम्याश्च ये ।।
तस्माद्यज्ञात्सर्वहुतः ऋचः सामानि जज्ञिरे ।
छन्दांसि जज्ञिरे तस्माद्यजुस्तमादजायत ।।

(RV. X. 90. 8-9)

The latter is known as *Mānasī Sṛishṭi* of Prajāpati. When the plan or the design is determined in the mind of the Maker, visible forms begin to flow forth as so many creatures called *Paśu*. *Paśu* symbolises the manifestation of *Prāṇa* on the level of matter. In each *Paśu* again there is a Triad of forms, viz. mind, life and matter, or the psychic man, the vital man and the physical man. No animal life is possible without the presence of these three together in each centre. In the symbolical language of the Purusha Sūkta these are referred to as the animals of the village, of the forest and of the air. The enumeration is somewhat strange, but is purposeful. The animals of the village (*Grāmya Paśu*) are the five gross elements which are egregious, i. e. living and moving together in a flock. The wild animals, on the other hand, move at will in the forest, making a herd of their own, but without associating with any other species and, therefore, were taken as an appropriate symbol of the unharnessed energy of the mind, moving at will, over a free tract. These animals are untethered and their movement is unregulated. The creatures of the air symbolise

the *Prāṇa* for the obvious reason that air is the source of breath. The Ṛishi has taken these three to the exclusion of other classes of animals like the watery creatures for the reason that his intention was to symbolise the three-fold material manifestation of the life-principle, as *Manas*, *Prāṇa* and *Vāk*. The *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* has clearly brought out this distinction of the tame and wild animals in its symbolical signification, viz. that the Earth is the type of the domestic animals and Heaven of the wild ones, (Ś B. 13.2.4.1). Once we invoke the imagery of heaven and earth with reference to the two classes of animals and also the intermediate region of the air for the third, we are faced with the flood of meanings associated with these well-defined symbols of Vedic thought.

The Creator thus planned in the beginning the two-fold creation, viz. that of ideas symbolised as the three Vedas and that of material manifestation symbolised as the three classes of *Paśus*. The Ṛishis have constantly kept in view the dominant and basic fact of creation as thought or mind or Veda or *Chhandas* or Ṛishi, which all point to one and the same principle. Agni as *Yājusha Purusha*, the Supreme Primeval Power abiding in the centre needs the assistance of the other two associated principles, namely, *Gati* and *Āgati*. The former is symbolised as *Ṛik* and the latter as *Sāma* which we respectively designate as diameter and its circumference (*Vishkambha* and *Maṇḍala*). There

is very often a reference to *Skambha*, the Pillar, which supports Heaven and Earth, the *Axis Mundi* which is the erect or straight rod forming the base of a *Maṇḍala*, that is the cosmos. It is clearly stated in the Rig Veda that simultaneously with the kindling of Agni, the *Ṛiks* and the *Sāmans* offer themselves to it so that Agni may be able to receive *Soma* and complete the *Yajña*.

अग्निर्जागार तमृचः कामयन्तेऽग्निर्जागार तमु सामानि यन्ति ।
अग्निर्जागार तमयं सोम आह तवाहमस्मि सख्ये न्योकाः ॥
(Ṛig Veda V, 44,15).

AGNI AS ENKINDLED CENTRE—The awakening of Fire or the Life-principle in the centre must be fed with *Soma*. This makes posssible the Yajña. The Ṛishis esoterically say that the quickned fire becomes hungry and when it receives *Soma* as food, it becomes propitiated. After sometime, Agni again becomes hungry for food and the same process has to be repeated. This is what happens wherever life throbs in the centre of an organism. The principle of hunger is spoken of as the weeping of the babe (*Rudana*), for obviously the chid cries when it is hungry. Because of weeping, Agni is styled as Rudra ( यदरोदीत्तस्माद्रुद्रः, ŚB. 6.1.3.10). Agni is compared to a sleeping child that becomes conscious or wakes up in the centre or altar of the sacrifice. We might usefully compare this with the nucleus of a seed, which as soon as it is deposited inside the womb of mother earth, becomes

quickened with life, i.e. its nucleus becomes active in a two-fold process of throbbing, i.e. expansion and contraction which must be satisfied with food in order that the continuity of this dual force may be maintained. Thus the presence of two principles of *Ṛik* and *Sāma* is essential to keep the chariot of Indra or the vital centre (*Madhya Prāṇa*) moving (ऋक्सामाभ्यां प्र रथं वर्तयन्ति RV. X. 114. 6 ; ऋक्सामे वै( इन्द्रस्य ) हरी, Ś B. 4. 4. 3. 6).

When we speak of the three Vedas as signifying the three principles of the life-force in manifestation, we rely upon evidence that exists in the Vedic texts, and also in the *Brāhmaṇas*, where *Gati* is said to belong to the *Yajur Veda* (*Yājushī Gatiḥ*), *Mūrti* or form to *Ṛigveda* (*Ṛichā mūrtiḥ*) and *Maṇḍala* or *Tejas*, the peripheral circumscribing as *Sāma* (*Sāmamayaṁ tejaḥ*, *Gopatha*, 1.2.9). But it does not mean that the Vedic texts so named did not exist, or become cancelled by the symbolical meaning. The *Veda* stands for the cosmic lore and the Ṛishis were concerned more with the enunciation or the metaphysical principles or the laws of cosmogony through their specially designed terminology, rather than giving a historical picture of human institutions. Such sporadic touches or references do occur, but are of quite secondary importance. The main burden of the Mantric statements is invariably esoteric which fact may be recognised even by a cursory perusal of the hymns. If taken otherwise, they become devoid of rationale.

PURA AND PURUSHA—We might understand here the connotation of *Purusha*. As soon as the centre is enkindled with the principle of life, a *Pura* is created comprising the dimensions of length and its circuit. This is true of all forms that come into existence in the organism of life. The vital principle in the centre is a *Purusha*. We call it a *Yājusha Purusha* because both rest and motion are present within its heart. This is also known as *Chākshusha Purusha* because the creation of form is the result of the awakening of the life-principle, or the opening of its eye. There are in fact two *Purushas*, One is the thousand-headed *Purusha* seeing with a thousand eyes and standing on a thousand legs. This is the Universal or cosmic life principle, which exists for all times, and everywhere in unmanifest form. The other is the *Daśāṅgula* standing on ten fingers of the two feet which represents the individual organism, which depends for its existence and life on its unmanifest form.

SYMBOLISM OF THE EYE—The symbolism of the Eye is important and Sūrya is said to be the best symbol of creation as Eye, which may be seen fixed in heaven for ever. In the Upanishads, the triple nature of the eye is elaborated in the three colours, black, white and red present there, and they are just interpreted in terms of the trinitarian nature of the creative principle symbolised as the Eye. The sun as *Trayī-Vidyā* is the eye of Agni,

Mitra and Varuṇa which implies that the three principles are manifest in the form of Sūrya and that they have created the great solar orb as a result of their tectonic interaction, namely, rest and two-fold motion, all coherently integrated as an ordered system. The Sun is the symbol of Yajña, namely, the emergence of supreme creational order out of the womb of the preceding chaos. Not one or two but millions and billions of suns stand in an alignment of which the two ends are unknown, but the Sun, visible to our eyes and being the father of the Mother principle or the earth on which we stand and have our being, is the perfect representative of the Supernal Sun, which has brought the universal system of this Yajña into being. The Sūrya is, therefore, a perfect specimen of *Trayī-Vidyā*. As said in the *Śatapatha* even persons who were not knowledgeable enough were shown this Sūrya in Heaven as the stable symbol of *Trayī-Vidyā*, or the trinitarian basis of creation.

# Lecture III

## AGNI VIDYĀ

AGNI, AS THE SON OF TWO ARAṆIS—The whole of the Ṛig-Veda is treated as an exposition of the Agni doctrine. The nature and mystical significance of Agni have been explained in several ways. Firstly, Agni is the fire produced from the two fuel-sticks by attrition which is symbolically explained as Araṇi-Vidyā :—

अरण्योर्निहितो जातवेदा गर्भइव सुधितो गर्भिणीषु ।

(R V., III, 29,2)

The two fire-sticks, the upper Araṇi and the lower Araṇi are symbolical of the two parents whose union produces the child. The upper fire-stick is the Father, the lower one is the Mother and the child that is born is symbolised as Fire. Agni is the result of friction or churning (*Manthana*). This churning of the fire was undertaken in the beginning by the fire-priests, named Atharvans. The word 'Atharvan' literally signifies one who is possessed of *Athara*, a word which originally must have denoted fire as the meaning is still preserved in the Iranian and Pahlvi tradition as *Athar*, *Āzar*, *Ātish*. There are several other traditions as to how fire was lit in primeval ages by Manu, Aṅgiras and other Ṛishis and sages.

AGNI AS PRĀṆA—The mystical significance is viz. that the original fire which is the source of life and cosmos was Prāṇa. The agent or the effective cause which makes the fire manifest on the level of matter is variously styled as Manu, Aṅgiras, Atharvan, etc.. Each has its esoteric significance. Manu points to the principle of mind, Angiras to that of Prāṇa or life and Atharvan to that of Vāk, Pañcha-bhūtas or matter. Originally Fire was one but for the sake of manifestation it becomes three and in further manifestation seven, eight, ten, forty-nine and so on (cf. Agni Vaṁśa, Matsya P. ad. 51, Vayu. 29, Āraṇyakaparva 209-212, Mārkaṇḍeya, 52).

THREE FIRES—Agni, Vāyu and Sūrya are three fires but they are essentially one. Each one of them symbolises a truth of manifestation. Pursuing this triple nature of Agni, it is said that fire has three births, three mothers, each responsible for one birth ; three truths and three worlds

विद्मा ते अग्ने त्रेधा त्रयाणि विद्मा ते धाम विभृता पुरुत्रा ।
विद्मा ते नाम परमं गुहा यद्विद्मा तमुत्सं यत आजगन्थ ॥
(RV. X. 45.2)

त्रिरस्य ता परमा सन्ति सत्या स्पार्हा देवस्य जनिमान्यग्नेः ।
अनन्ते अन्तः परिवीत आगाच्छुचिः शुक्रो अर्यो रोरुचानः ॥
(RV. IV. 1.7)

The father, the mother and the babe are the three fires through which life becomes manifest and each

one of whom is indispensable for creating new life. Each one of them is a different form of the basic energy which is the source of all the powers in the world, both unmanifest and manifest. That infinite universal power is said to be as Aditi in the Vedas and Nature in modern terminology. She is Prakriti whose supreme activity creates from the beginning of time until the end of time. She is called the Deva-Mātā, the Mother of Gods, the Great Mother, *Magna Mater*, the same as Mahī Mātā of the Ṛigveda (V, 47, 1). Motherhood is her fundamental quality and most of the ancient cultures have formulated an archetypal mother who creates all living forms, in the plant, animal and human kingdoms. The Mother requires to be fecundated by the seed of the Primeval Father, viz. the Self-existent Brahman beyond whom it is alogical to speak of any other entity. The Self-existent Father is justly called Svayambhū or Svarāj and the cosmic Mother as Virāj. Their son is the cosmos, symbolised as Sūrya.

SŪRYA, AN ĀDITYA—Sūrya is an Āditya, son of Aditi. In fact, all the important gods are Ādityas, as Mitra, Varuṇa, Agni, Indra, Bhaga, Pūshā, Aryamā, etc.. It is said that Aditi had eight sons who were the Āditya Gods. Aditi possessed eight wombs to produce them, *Ashṭa-putrā, Ashṭa-yoniḥ* (AV.8.9.21 ; RV. X, 72, 8). The visible son in our sky is the abode of all Gods (*Viśvadevya*), which implies that

all the powers in earth and heaven, manifest and unmanifest, material and divine, have their source in the Sun. The Ṛishis were perfectly aware of the identity of Sūrya with each of these Ādityas and therefore, it is said that the Sun at dawn is Agni and at noon Indra, Varuṇa at night and Mitra during day time. He is the Lord of the Yajña. He is Vishṇu of the three steps. He is Bhaga, the most potent creative power, whose light is catalytic of a chain action. He is Aryamā, the deity presiding over child-birth. The eclectic nature of the Sun is the basic truth of Vedic thought, and the available documentation in the Mantras is unambiguous.

AGNI AND SŪRYA—What is the nature of Sūrya ? This question is also asked and replied. Sūrya is the lofty face of Agni shining in heaven, radiant and divine—

अग्नेरनीकं बृहतः सपर्यं दिवि शुक्रं यजतं सूर्यस्य ।
RV. X. 7. 3.

The Brāhmaṇa writers and the Bṛihad-Devatā speak of this identity in many places. It was like an axiom of Vedic symbolism. As a matter of fact it seems to have been a scientific truth with them. Agni and Sūrya are one and the same, viz. both are forms of heat or temperature and light. With reference to the former, it is said that Agni is divine heat *Devaushṇyam* (Maitṛī Up. 2. 6). Whatever heat is

there in this world and in whatever form we experience it, all that has its source in the blazing temperature, created in the beginning, called *Abhīddha Tapas* (RV. X, 190, 1), or *Ūshmā* (Āraṇyakaparva, 211.4). What that primeval temperature was, which produced millions and billions of suns, can only be imagined. As the scientists tell us, the surface temperature of our sun is 6000°C, while the temperature at the centre is about 2 million degrees centigrade. What is true of one sun is also true of other innumerable suns with much vaster magnitudes of calculation. The astronomical figures stagger imagination and are a varietable headache ( *Śīrsha Praheliká* ). The immensity of nature is beyond the ken of the scientist and the philosopher alike. The many stars, constellirations and galaxies are like shooting sparks from that primeval conflagration, known as *Agraja Tapas*, i. e. the original heat or the temperature in the beginning. That Supernal Sun, which, out of multiple fission filled by space with innumerable burning coals, viz. the stars, is called Aṅgiras, of which the esoteric etymology offered by Brāhmaṇas is both poetic and scientific. He is called Aṅgiras, because of being a cluster or source of live coals (*Aṅgāra*). Such sementic efforts aim at the exposition of meaning and do not insist on phonetic soundness. The Brāhmaṇa writers reveal in this approach hundreds of etymologies which are invariably helpful in advancing the thought and clarifying the meaning.

ĀṄGIRASA AGNI—The Ṛigveda itself declares that the Aṅgirā Ṛishi who existed in the beginning of creation was Agni himself (त्वमग्ने प्रथमो अङ्गिरा ऋषिर्देवो देवानामभवः शिवः सखा, RV. I.31.1). It became customary to invoke in the ritual Ṛishi Aṅgiras as archetypal for kindling the fire in the Yajña ; as Aṅgiras of yore did, so we do today ; as Manu lighted the fire, so do we today (*Aṅgirasvat, Manushvat*). The seer doing what Aṅgiras and Manu did feels confident of the truth of the sacred manner in which fire was kindled in past ages and would have to be kindled ever anon.

YAMA THE ARCH-ANCESTOR—There is a definite law of producing the fire again and again in new forms, in new times and at each new sacrifice which the eternal dawn brings with it in an endless cycle of time. Each new generation is repeating what the ancestors did, so that each one of us is a link in the long chain of forebears at the head of which presides Yama, the arch-ancestor, who is the controller of all the ordinances that make up these worlds. On the top of the Cosmic Tree which meets the ridge of heaven, which is clustered with evergreen foliage, is seated Lord Yama and in assembly with the gods he drinks the potion of immortality i. e. life or Prāṇa, (यस्मिन्वृक्षे सुपलाशे देवैः संपिबते यमः, RV. X, 135, 1). That immortal life or sap, which Yama and all other gods find delightful is the sap of life, the *radicle humudus*. This was the ancient seed which produced

the Cosmic Tree (*Pratna-Retas*, *Bhuvanasya Retas*, RV., I, 164.36). Yama is life eternal since being God of Death, he is above mortality and he is recreating himself in ever-fresh living forms, each the recurrent symbol of life, and graphically named as Kumāra.

KUMĀRA—This Kumāra is Agni. Its exposition is Kumāra-Vidyā, which is the same as Agni-Vidyā. In the legends, Kumāra is said to be the son of Agni. Śiva had two sons; one was Kumāra, a manifestation of Agni and the other was Gaṇapati, a manifestation of Soma, since Siva represents the composite form of Agni and Soma. The Brāhmaṇa writers often define Agni as Rudra—

त्वमग्ने रुद्रः, RV. 2.1.7
यो वै रुद्रः सोऽग्निः, S'B 3.3.1.10, 6.1.3.10
रुद्रोऽग्निः, Tāṇḍya. 12.4.24
एष रुद्रः । यदग्निः, TB. 1.1.5.8-9,1.1.6.6,1.1.8.4,1.4.3.6

Agni is produced from the burning of the wood. It is described as the Branch (*Śākhā* or *Valśā*), the tree (*Vṛiksha*), and the forest (*Vana*). In each stage of manifestation it is one and the same principle by which the unmanifest power takes manifest form of which the wood is the explicit symbol familiar to every one in the form of the fuel. The Vedic word '*Samidh*' became a significant symbol of Fire. The fuel stick is originally one but variantly spoken of as three (*Tisraḥ samidhaḥ*, RV. I. 164. 25), as seven (*Sapta*

*samidhaḥ*) and as twenty-one (*Tri-sapta samidhāḥ*, RV. X. 90. 15). The language of the ritual is but an extension of the metaphysical idea and the transference of thought to the concrete vehicle constitutes what is termed as symbolical.

THE ESOTERIC MEANING OF AGNI—What is the significance of Agni in the eyes of the Vedic Seers ? Why should such supreme value be attached to Agni in the Ṛigveda ? Why the seers themselves have explained Agni in consonance with the philosophy as the root of their cosmogonic formulation ? As we study the Ṛigveda with an inquisitive mind, we find ourselves in the hands of these questions and no one can avoid facing them for a conscientious interpretation of the utterances in the Mantras. The Ṛishis speak of Agni as Deva, the divine principle which upholds the Yajña. They are never tired of saying that Agni is the immortal principle among mortals :—

यो मर्त्येष्वमृत ऋतावा होता (RV. IV.2.1)
अग्निर्मर्तेष्वाविशन् (RV. V. 25.4)
अयं कविरकविषु प्रचेता मर्तेष्वग्निरमृतो निधायि (RV.V. 4.4)
अमर्त्यस्य मर्त्यासुविक्षु (RV. X. 79.1)
द्वितीयोभूदमृतो मर्त्येष्वा (RV. VIII. 71.11)
विश्वायुर्यो अमृतो मर्त्येषूषर्भुद्भूदतिथिर्जातवेदाः (RV.VI,4.2)
मर्तेष्वाग्निरमृतो निधायि (RV. X. 45.7)
इदं ज्योतिरमृतं मर्त्येषु (RV. VI. 9.4)
स मर्त्येष्वमृतप्रचेता (RV. VI. 5.5)

This offers a pointer to their thought. The immortal power within this mortal body is the life principle called Prāṇa and naturally Agni in many places is explained as Prāṇa—

प्राणोऽवा अग्निः, ŚB. 2.2.3.15, 9.5.1.68
तदग्निर्वै प्राणः, JVB. 4.23.11
प्राणा अग्निः, ŚB. 6.3.1.21, 6.8.2.10
ते वाऽएते प्राणा एव यद् अग्नयः, ŚB. 2.2.2.18
प्राणोऽमृतं यद्धयग्ने रूपम्, ŚB. 9.1.2.32
प्राणो वै जातवेदाः, AB. 2.39

MANIFESTION OF AGNI PRĀṆA—The question may be asked as to where this fiery principle of life is made manifest. The Vedas are clear in their answer stating that Prāṇa or life can only become manifest in the body made of the five material elements. The life principle alone is subtle but it descends to the plain of matter in the gross body. The Ṛigveda speaks of *Ṛita* as the supreme order and entity pervading the heavens and the earth, which becomes manifest as *Nṛi-shad*, i. e. finding an abode amongst men. The Śatapatha is emphatic in explaining this crucial word as Prāṇa. In the Asyavāmīya Sūkta there is the mention of the three principles of mind, life and matter, being coalesced as one in the physical body or on the level of earth ( भूम्या असुरसृगात्मा क्वसित्, RV. I.164.4 ) Here the word *Asṛik* stands for blood, which is the symbol of living matter, *Asu* refers to Prāṇa or vitality within the body and *Ātmā* to the principle of mind.

In Vedic terminology as well as in the subsequent thought the entity created by the coming in together of these three principles is called *Jīva*, the human self of which the three characteristic features are described as breath, activity and the impelling force of mind, अनच्छये तुरगातु जीवमेजद् ध्रुवं मध्य आ पस्त्यानाम् (RV.I. 164.30) This Jīva or Prāṇa, as we may freely call it, is immortal, spoken of as the uterine brother of the mortal (अमर्त्यो मर्त्येनासयोनिः, I.164.30.38). The principle of the mind or consciousness is the first to be created and wherever the mind becomes reflected in matter, there is the body. It is a wonderous phenomenon how the dead earth becomes invested with life or mind or consciousness. The Ṛishi thinks : there are sages and sages, but where is the wise sage who will reveal this secret in his verses, namely the supreme secret of the birth of consciousness or animate life in inanimate matter (कवीयमानः क इह प्रवोचद्देवं मनः कुतो अधि प्रजातम्, RV. I. 164. 18). *Who knows ? Who can tell* ? are eternal questions to which no answer is forthcoming and the mystery remains for ever hidden (*Guhyam, Apīchyam*).

LIFE AND ITS THREE FEATURES, OR AGNI AND HIS THREE BROTHERS—Life is distinguished by three characteristic features, viz. growth, assimilation and reproduction. These apparently are couched in modern terms but were well known and significantly expressed in the Vedic symbolism as the Three Brothers of Agni (I. 164. 1). The First Brother is spoken of as the

young babe and the grey-haired old man (*Vāma palita hotā*). This is a clear reference to the principle of growth which has two aspects or two points between which there is a constant oscillation or a mutual pull by which the rhythm is established and the organism starts its inevitable process of growing. This is symbolised as the process of the Dwarf (*Vāmana*) becoming the Giant (*Virāṭ*). How this mircale happens is narrated in the legend of Vishṇu taking three steps. Thus, growth is striding by which the microcosmic becomes macrocosmic. Each giant has its inevitable beginning in the dwarf. What later assumes a colossal form starts from the tiniest cell. This law is typified as Vishṇu, the First Brother, who is both young and old, viz. the Dwarf and the Giant or the Hero as a Boy and as the eternal Man. Life-principle is changeless and eternal but manifests each time in a new life (नवो नवो भवति जायमानः, RV. X. 85.19). This renovation is a recurrent process of which the most perfect symbol is the child, which is nature's mysterious technique of perpetuating life in unmanifest forms.

The Second Brother is described as a voracious eater. It points to the process of assimilation and elimination, what in Sanskrit is defined as *Annāda* and *Anna*, i.e. the eater of the food and food. Agni is *Annāda* and Soma is *Anna*. Unless food and its eater combine in a well established rhythm, no life can subsist. This is true of the plants, animals and men.

What is accepted by the life within the body as food is called *Brahmaudana*, literally the food of Brahman, and what is thrown out as refuse or rejected as ash is *Pravargya*. Wherever there is a Purusha, viz. Agni as life having its abode in the city that is the body, Agni must function as *Annāda*, i.e. assimilating food from the outside world. This is also nature's design that the vital principle functioning in the body cannot accept anything as its food unless the latter has been transformed by the life-principle itself. Only the food from the organic life can be acceptable to the eater of food. Agni alone can kindle Agni ( अग्निनाग्निः समिध्यते, RV. I. 12.6). But the latter Agni which serves as food is said to be the junior friend of the elder Agni, who is the eater of the food. In fact, Agni and Soma, although differentiated, are basically emanations from a single source. If the first brother is Vishṇu, the middle brother of Agni is Brahmā, represented as a pot-bellied God. The eating of food is the same as the principle of hunger (*Aśanāyā*). As soon as the vital centre starts functioning, it becomes hungry for food. Hunger is expressed as the weeping of the child, which cries for food and as soon as food is given the child becomes propitiated. This rhythm is its true life. Food has no independent existence. It must surrender itself to the Eater and so does Soma merge itself in Agni. The union of Soma with Agni is Yajña and each individual as

well as the cosmos is conceived of as the composite form of Agni and Soma. Soma is also called *Rayi* and it is said that Agni assimilates *Rayi* and is sustained day after day ( अग्निना रयिमश्नवत् पोषमेव दिवे दिवे, RV. I.1.3). So long as Agni and Soma are in harmony, life is assured, but when this process is interrupted, life disintegrates and departs. This is visualised in the story of Śiva and Satī, when the two forces are in discord and of Śiva and Pārvatī, when they are in accord. When Agni is hungry for Soma, its form becomes terrific (*Bhairava*), who holds a begging bowl in his hand as the symbol of asking for food (*Bhikshāṭana Mūrti*). Agni as Rudra or Bhairava and Agni as Śiva, i.e. without Soma and with Soma, is a principle well understood in the Brāhmaṇas and the Purāṇas and some of the great legends about Śiva are illustrative of this basic conception ; e.g. Gaṅgā and Yamunā are both symbols of Soma, the death-conquering principle of mind and life by which Agni or Sushumnā is sustained. Gaṅgā of latter mythology is equal to Sarasvatī of the earlier symbolism representing the great flood of life and immortality descending from heaven to earth. An essential offshoot of the symbolism of Agni is rooted in the conception of Cow, Milk and Butter. Agni is spoken of as Butter (*Ghṛitam*)—

आग्नेयं वै घृतम्, ŚB. 7.4.1.41, 9.2.2.3

एतद्वा अग्नेः प्रियं धाम यद् घृतम्, TB. 1.1.9.6, 1.4.4.4, TS. 6.1.7.1

एषा ते शुक्र तनूः, VS. 4.17
एतद्वै प्रत्यक्षाद्यज्ञरूपं यद् घृतम्, ŚB. 12.8.2.15

GHṚITA AND WATER—Why should Agni be called by the name of Ghṛitam ? The answer is that Butter kindles the fire whereas water extinguishes it. The mother principle is symbolised as Water and also as Cow. The cow is the source of milk and butter. There is an essential difference between water and milk. Water symbolises the primeval source of creation when everything was enveloped in darkness. That was the ocean of Varuṇa (*Samudram*). For the sake of creation, the ocean of water is converted into an ocean of milk. In water there is no butter, but milk is permeated by millions and billions of tiny globules of butter in extremely emulsified form, and the same is referred to as the shower of butter (*pṛishadājyam*), which is compared to the seed of the father fecundating the mother (*reto vai ājyam*). It is the miraculous chemistry of the body of the cow which changes water into milk and this miracle is the chief characteristic of motherhood. The presence of butter in the milk is due to the seed or the principle of Agni which fertilises Soma or the mother. Therefore, Infinite Nature as the universal mother is conceived of as the Cow, whose milk sustains her calf, namely Sūrya, which is the centre of creation and which stands as the symbol of all the divine powers made manifest. The Ghṛita Sūkta (RV. IV. 58. 1-11) is a

eulogy of the principle of Butter or Agni or Sūrya or of the Cows (अग्निः, सूर्यो वाऽऽपो वा गावो वा घृतस्तुतिर्वा) which produce this potential seed of creation. The release of cows by Indra and Bṛahaspati is one of the great legends of the Ṛigveda and has its own meaning in the context of the creative process. The forces of creativity, which were imprisoned in realms of darkness, must be released to roam freely in space so that individual centres of manifestation may come into existence as Sūrya, which is another name of Indra :—

यदा सूर्यममुं दिवि शुक्रं ज्योतिरधारयः
(Said of Indra, RV.VIII.12.30)
इन्द्रः सूर्यमरोचयत् (RV. VIII.3.6)
इन्द्रः स्वर्षाजनयन्नहानि (RV. III.34.4)
इन्द्रः सूर्यं ससान (RV. III.34.9)

AGNI AS AGRI—Agni, as the primeval principle is spoken of as *Agri*, because it existed in the beginning of all things :—

स यदस्य सर्वस्याग्रमसृज्यत तस्मादग्रिरग्रिर्ह वै
तमग्निरित्याचक्षते परोक्षम् (ŚB. 6. 1. 1. 11)
तद्वा एनमेतदग्रे देवानां (प्रजापतिः) अजनयत्।
तस्मादग्निरग्रिर्ह वै नामैतद् यदग्निरिति (ŚB. 2.2.4.2)

The equation of *Agri* as Agni is rooted not in phonetics (*śābdī nirukti*), but in semantics (*ārthī nirukti*). Agni as the Golden Germ (*Hiraṇyagarbha*) existed before every thing else and from it were produced all beings ( हिरण्यगर्भः समवर्ततामे भूतस्य जातः पतिरेक आसीत् RV. X.121.1).

Agni as *Hiraṇyagarbha* was the abode of all the Gods. It was the quickened germ cell, the first cup or container, which began to collect the sap of life (*Upāṁśu Graha*). All the manifest powers preserved in the body were latent in the first cell and are believed to be but various forms of Agni (*Agniḥ sarvā devatāḥ*, AB. 2. 3).

AGNI VAIŚVĀNARA—A familiar name of Agni is *Vaiśvānara*. As explained in the Brāhmaṇas that which is within the body is called *Vaiśvānara*. ( स एषोऽग्निर्वैश्वानरः यत्पुरुषः, ŚB. 10. 6. 1. 11). The body of the individual as well as of the cosmos is the abode of *Vaiśvānara*. The etymology of this word bespeaks its meaning. *Vaiśvānara* is comprised of two words : *Viśva* and *Nara*, i. e. an aggregate of the three *Naras* or the three Purushas. These three Persons are the governing principles of the three Lokas, namely Agni of the earth, Vāyu of Antariksha and Sūrya of heaven. As a matter of fact, these are spoken of as the three *Purohitas*, each one as the priest of its respective world. Agni is *Purohita* and Pṛithvi is its world, called *Purodhātā* which it permeates. Vāyu is *Purohita* and Antariksha is *Purodhātā*. Sūrya is *Purohita* and sky (*Dyauḥ*) is Purodhātā. This a language loaded with ritual symbolism. In simple language the three regulating powers refer to mind, life and matter, spoken of as the three priests or three deities, Agni, Vāyu and Sūrya. Agni has reference to the material

or physical body, Vāyu to the vital and Sūrya to the psychic. The integration of these three in an organism means Conscious Life. Their coherence is the supreme fact of creation. Although three, they coalesce together into the one Purusha called *Vaiśvānara.* The one distinguishing feature of *Vaiśvānara* is its simultaneous relationship with the earth on one side and the heaven on the other. It is the Babe of *Dyāvā-Pṛithivī.* We can only witness its working on the plane of matter, that is, within the body. In gross ṣymbolism it is said to be the digestive fire which sustains the physical body as explained in the Gītā :—

अहं वैश्वानरो भूत्वा प्राणिनां देहमाश्रितः।
प्राणापानसमायुक्तः पचाम्यन्नं चतुर्विधम्॥

(15. 14)

Agni is thus the voracious and insatiable eater of food, the tongue of the gods, the open jaw for receiving the substance by which the Gods live (*Agnir devānāṁ jaṭharam,* TB. 2.7.12.3).

In the first Mantra of the Ṛigveda, Agni is spoken of as the deity of Yajña, the priest sacrificing in each season, the prime invoker and the bestower of jewels (*ratna-dha-tamam*). What are these jewels and how many ? To this question the answer is that, according to the Ṛigveda itself, there are seven jewels, which Agni has deposited in every household (RV. V. 1. 5).

Each body or organism is the household where the domestic fire or the life-principle is established and tended. The seven jewels are the Vasus, the mind, life and the five material elements. All the seven are essential for the manifestation of life or for the continued existence of the body. They are the seven essential principles of manifestation and exist together as the seven sons of Agni *Viśpatiṁ saptaputram,* RV. I. 164. 1) where Agni is the householder (*Gṛihapati*) or the lord of all creatures.

It was the choice of the Ṛishis to formulate their metaphysical doctrines in a language of which the symbolical pattern explodes with multiple meaning. That symbolism is cast in the language of the Devas, of Yajña, of Chhandas, of Ṛishis, of Pitṛis etc. Although seemingly different, a thread of unity lies through them and they are but different aspects of one and the same basic principal called Prajāpati, the Creator. The Vedic doctrine of cosmic knowledge, *Philosophia perennis,* is Prajāpati-Vidyā and Prajāpati is the same as Agni or *Hiraṇya-Garbha.* The deity having multiple names is One (*Yo Devānāṁ nāmadhā ek eva*). All the worlds are in Him as the spokes in the navel of a wheel.

# Lecture IV

## SOMA-VIDYĀ

AGNI AND SOMA—The Vedas conceive of Agni and Soma as two companions or inseparable principles in the causation of the worlds. Agni is fire and Soma is water. There have been two theories favoured by ancient philosophers, the first holding the origin of the cosmos from Fire and the second from Water. The one is called the Neptunist, which relates to the aqueous origin of the earth. The other is named the Plutonian theory, i. e. fire as an agent in the formation of the earth. In the Ṛigveda the ontological statement of these two views is clear and emphatic :—

आपो भूयिष्ठा इत्येको अब्रवीदग्निर्भूयिष्ठ इत्यन्यो अब्रवीत् ।
वर्धयन्तीं बहुभ्यः प्रैको अब्रवीदृता वदन्तश्चमसाँ अपिंशत ॥
(RV. I. 161.9)

Amougst the architects of the universe, a controversy arose. Some said water is of greater value ; others said fire is of greater value ; still others, presenting a synthesis of these two pointed to the lightning-cloud which combines both the fiery and the watery principles. Thus speaking the truth of their minds did they fashion the bowls of creation.

MIRACLES OF ṚIBHUS—There were three Ṛibhus or Brother-architects whose tectonic efforts have

brought the cosmos into existence. They are said to have done five miracles. They created the cow, who is the symbol of Soma. They created the horse, who is the symbol of Prāṇa or fire. They created a moving chariot, which is the Saṁvatsara or Sūrya or the body of the cosmos, and the individual in which both the horse and the cow are Agni and Soma find their scope to function. Fourthly, the Ṛibhus brought new life and vigour to their parents. This rejuvenation of the parental principle refers to the creation of Dyāvā Pṛithivī, the two universal parents, who are ageless and who have the infinite power of youthful fecundation. They are symbols of Agni and Soma both being separate yet their wombs are one (*eka yoni*). They are compared like two inverted bowls (*Uttānayogoścham-voryoniranta*, I.164.33). 'Dyauḥ is my father, the Creator, the navel of immortality; this broad earth is my Mother. They are recumbent, facing each other and mingle their two organs into one for the sake of generation. Thus the father deposits his seed in the distant mother' (RV. I. 164.33). This doctrine of the two parents is the foundation of Vedic cosmogony. The principle of *eka-yonitā* i. e. sharing in common their separate wombs is enunciated clearly both in the Vedas and the Purāṇas, for example, in the Śānti Parvan of the *Mahābhārata* we read :

अग्नीषोमौ पूर्वमेकयोनी प्रवर्तितौ ।

Śānti, 329.1

Agni and Soma sharing one womb, augment each other and support all these worlds. Agni is *Taijas* and Soma is watery. The dual entities are exemplified in a number of other symbols as the two fire-sticks, the upper *araṇi* being the father and the lower the mother. The former being loftier than heaven and the latter greater than the earth.

FIFTH MIRACLE—ONE BOWL TRANSFORMED INTO FOUR BOWLS—The fifth miracle wrought by the Ṛibhus was to transform the one Bowl, which originally existed as the common drinking vessel for all the gods (*eka devapāna chamasa*), namely the one undifferentiated source of all the celestial and earthly powers into a four-fold division. The one remained as it was without, in any manner, losing its contents or dimensions, but at the same time as if by auto-fission, three other bowls were produced out of it. These three have reference to the cosmic Triad elaborated in multiple ways. But keeping to the symbolism of the bowl, one of them became the container of Soma, which is the *Droṇa-kalaśa* in the sacrifice; the other became the receptacle for Agni symbolised as *Ūkhā*, the frying pan for which the ritual of *Ūkhā-sambharaṇa* is elaborated. The third bowl is that in which both Agni and Soma have their abodes. This last is symbolised as *Gharam*, viz. the Boiler or the simmering milk pot in which milk, as the symbol of Soma, is heated by the fire

or burning fuel-sticks from below. Even this heated milk or Soma in the *Gharma* is further strengthened by the principle of Agni represented by Butter (*Ghṛita*) poured into it. What is this *Gharma* or the boiling milk-pot ? The answer is that which lies within the body is that Boiler which keeps its constant temperature as the sign of health and normal behaviour and with that sufficient heat is heating the food viz. Soma to sustain life in the body. It is from this point of view that *Gharma* may be explained as Prāṇa or Agni. As a matter of fact, just as one Prāṇa is divided into two as Prāṇa and Apāna or into three as Prāṇa, Apāna and Vyāna, similarly, the Ṛishis speak of one *Gharma* (*Gharmaḥ tapaḥ*, RV. V. 30. 15), also called *Ajasra gharma*, the constant boiling pot (RV. III. 26. 7) or as *Abhīddha gharma* or the heated pot (RV. I.164.24). There is mention of two Gharmas called contiguous or co-extensive with each other (*Gharmā samantā*, RV. X. 114.I) and three Gharmas (*triyo-gharmāsaḥ*, RV. VII. 33. 7). According to the explanation given in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, both Agni and Āditya are the cosmic milk pots for the boiling of the life principle (*Agnirvai gharmaḥ*, *Śatapatha*, II.6.2.2; *Ādityo vai gharmaḥ*, *Śatapatha*, II.6.222); cf. also AV. VIII, 9, 13; IV.11.1-6).

SOMA, THE MOTHER PRINCIPLE—The duality of Agni and Soma represents the basal dichotomy without which life cannot be created and the manifest

world cannot come into existence. We have discussed the nature of Agni in a previous discourse. The doctrine of Soma finds equally plentiful scope in the Vedic Mantras. The idea is that the waters existed in the beginning as the womb of all creation. Those Waters formed an ocean, namely the infinite substratum of all manifest forms (*Mama yoni rapsvantaḥ samudre*, RV. X. 125. 7). The Purāṇas describe this primeval ocean of waters as *Nāra*. This is the symbol of the mother principle which existed in the beginning. There can be no conception of the creation of the world without the pre-existence of mother. She is variously named as Virāj or Parmeshṭhī, which is also described as the universal ocean of Soma. In the words of the *Gītā*, this *mahat* or the Universal served as the womb (*Mama yonir-mahat Brahma*, Gītā, XIV. 3). The generative principle as the mother represents the power of measuring out the forms which take birth from the womb but the dynamism or the force which impels this process is indispensible and must precede even the mother. That is known as Aja, the unborn creator, which in latter terminology, is called Svayambhū symbolising the father principle. Out of the union of the two, the child is born which has various names, e.g. Agni, Sūrya, Prāṇa, Nārāyaṇa, Hiraṇya-Garbha, Vasishṭha etc.. Agni is said to have its source in the waters and therefore, named *Apāṁ-napāt*. The Ṛigveda speaks of the mighty waters

(*Bṛihatīr-āpaḥ*) as containing the universe and then conceiving and giving birth to Agni (*Garbhaṃ dadhānaḥ janayantiragniṃ*, RV. X.121.7. Then, in the form of that Agni, came into existence the unique life principle of all the Gods (*tato devānaṁ samavartatā surekaḥ*, RV. X. 121. 7). This life germ is termed as *Ka*, viz. who, i. e. a mystery or an arch-secret, which was unrevealed in the beginning as it is to-day.

CREATIVE PRINCIPLES—Speaking basically, Agni is conceived of as the principle of heat (*Ghraṁsa*) and cold (*Hima*) (*Agnī himaṁ ghranisaṁ cha*, AV. 13. 1.46). That is one way of looking ; the other is we speak of Agni as the principle of dryness and Soma as wetness or moisture (*Yat sushkaṁ tadāgnevaṁ yat saumyaṁ tadārdram*, ŚB. 1.6.3.23). The world is composed of humidity and dryness and the entire cycle of creation depends on the interaction of these two principles. This is compared to the circulation of water which ascends to the sky by the principle of heat and comes back to the earth by the principle of refrigeration. The Ṛigveda states it in clear terms:

समानमेतदुदकमुच्चैत्यव चाहभिः।
भूमिं पर्जन्या जिन्वन्ति दिवं जिन्वन्त्यग्नयः॥
(RV., I. 164.51)

The governing power behind this cycle is named *ahaḥ*, i. e. the principle of day and night which stand as the symbols of Agni and Soma, Mitra and Varuṇa,

the White *Rajas* and the Black *Rajas* or, in modern terms, motion and rest. The black or night forms the substratum of all forces which are released into activity from their unmanifest source and thereby we witness the creative process symbolised as Day. The scope of Vedic symbolism scales new heights and seeks fresh formulations, e. g. Dyauḥ is the symbol of day and Agni, and Pṛithivī is the symbol of night and Soma. Agni from the earth below raises water above to the heaven and Parjanya or the clouds from the heaven to the earth below. This Agni-Parjanya pair is the visual symbol of the cosmic cycle of heat and cold or dryness and wetness or the relative variation in temperature, which creates two dual forces out of a condition of equilibrium.

AGNI AND SOMA AS TWO BROTHERS—In the ŚB. Agni and Soma are spoken of as two Brothers, (*Agnīshomau bhrātarau*, 11. 1.6.19), or more correctly, as Brother and Sister. The Brother is Agni and the Sister is Soma. These are the enternal pair of Yama-Yamī, who are celebrated in a famous hymn of the Ṛigveda. Yama invokes the inevitability of the divine ordinances according to which both Agni and Soma must for ever preserve their individual nature and should never cross their proper limits or get fused by which the order of creation would be thrown into confusion. It is Yamī or the principle of Soma which is watery or unstable or without a centre and is keen

to get mingled or offer itself into Agni. It is the same thing as saying that the Mother principle is a flood, also identified as the Universal Ṛita. In order to be effective for creation it must find its fulfilment not with a brother but with a husband who is bestowed by Yajña. The Union of Brother and Sister is chaos and confusion, which Yama of the Sūkta cannot entertain. But the Union of Husband and Wife is the truth of Yajña that is cosmic order as descending to the level of the individual. In the union of Brother and Sister, there is no complete merger, but only incest, whereas in that of marriage as Husband and Wife, the ideal is that of perfect merger, viz. the female principle becomes coextensive with male, or in other words, they cease to have their separate centre and become concentric. Man is one centre; woman is another centre. The effect of marriage is that they lose their individual identities and become one in all respects. According to the ideal of perfect marriage, as laid down in ritualistic or symbolical terms, the husband is Dyauḥ, the wife is Pṛithivī; the husband is *Ṛik* (diameter), the wife is *Sāma* (circumference). But it is just as one looks at it because in the conception of their total identity there is no difference left (*Amo'hamasmi sā tvaṁ sāmāhamasmi ṛik tvaṁ dyaurahṁ pṛithivī tvaṁ*, AV. 14.2.71). Manu puts this ideal union in words by saying that the orbits of husband and wife mingle with each other so perfectly that no separate identity for the wife is left. The

statement is made negative for the wife because the centre is conceived of as the male and the circumference as the female ; otherwise, there is absolutely no difference in the extension of the two for the whole magnitude of the circumference emanates from the centre, this position is clearly brought out by saying that husband and wife are equal coextensive and identical (*yo bhartā sa smṛitāṅganā*, Manu, IX. 45) The whole purport of the *Yama-Yamī Sūkta* (RV.X.10. is to define the proper relationship between Agni and Soma. This relationship is of a two-fold character. Firstly, they are brother and sister and secondly, husband and wife. Both of these relationships are essential for creation. The first pointing out to the basic duality made manifest by the splitting of one egg into two opposite halves or principles (Brother-Sister). The paradoxical position is that the two principles must keep their separateness for ever in the universal and at the same time must come together to create individual life. It is this latter which is conceived of as the union of the two principles as the union or marriage of husband and wife. It is interesting to note that in the mythical explanation both Agni and Soma as Brother-Sister are said to be sons of Indra, correspondig to Yama Yamī of Sūrya (*Sa indrā'gnīshomau bhrātarau*, ŚB. 11. 1. 6. 19). Sūrya as the symbol of Trayī-Vidyā combines in Him both Agni and Soma and the cycle of heat and cold depends on one and the same Sūrya, who, by his radiation at

different seasons, which are also created by Himself as Saṁvatsara or the year, brings into existence the the variation of temparature. Sūrya as Vivasvān is the father of Yama-Yamī from his wife Saraṇyū, the daughter of Tvashṭā or the creator. The lesson of the myth is that the supreme creative principle has put all its power in the sun and that the latter in union with that power creates the two opposite principles of Yama and Yamī, who stand as the symbols of heat and cold, dryness and moisture.

ṚITA OR SOMA-AS SUBSTRATUM OF THE UNIVERSE—From the point of view of cosmogony, the question may be asked as to what is the substratum of the universe. In Vedic thought Soma, which is also called *Ṛita*, is stated to be the universal substratum (*Ritameva parameshṭhī*, TB. I. 5. 5. 1). In this ocean of Soma all forces find their quiet rest. It is the condition of perfect equilibrium. For the sake of creation, the pendulum of time exercises its rhythm to agitate the waters of this ocean. This stormy condition is referred to as a churning (*Manthana*) and by many other symbolical terms as dance, propulsion, vibration, convulsion, expansion-contraction, etc.. The net result is that the heat, which was distributed evenly in its source becomes manifest at individual centres wherever this churning process is in operation. The churning is a spiral motion circumambulating round a fixed point of centre. This friction produces heat, i.e.

Agni takes birth out of the womb of the waters or Soma. Agni is, therefore, called *Apāṁ napāt*. These world-breeding forces take astronomical time and the tectonic process of the cosmos is a veritable headache of science and philosophy. 'How' and 'When' are the questions of mystery. But the patent fact is that these mighty convulsions throw into space the most beautiful Babe out of the womb of the primeval mother in the form of Sūrya. He is the visible sun invested with all the characteristic features of life and creativity. Sūrya is verily nothing else but Agni, spoken of as the lofty face of Agni in heaven, brilliant and divine. This Sūrya is but a spark like of which millions and billions fill the immensity of space like tiny specks on a vast blue print. The Ṛishis speak of Sūrya as the wonderful Babe of the infinite mother Aditi as the centre of a cosmic Yajña or as the visible point from an invisible source where the point is conceived of as Satya and the source as Ṛita. The main thing is that although Sūrya is created as an individual centre, it never loses its touch with the primeval mother and this is spoken of frequently as the cow sustaining its calf by her milk. Sūrya is the calf and universal nature is the mother. In simple words, the fact is that the energy in the sun is constantly being replenished from a source which created it or which was the mother principle. As the Ṛigveda says, the infinite universal cow stands in her

right and when she stepped forward the calf was absorbed to be tied to her legs (*padā vatsam bibhratī gaurudasthāt*, RV. I. 164.17 ). This constant feeding of the calf or Sūrya by the milk of the cow or Mother Virāj, i. e. the universal source, is an important plank of Vedic thought. That milk or flood energy which is replenishing the sun every moment and for ever is spoken of as Soma, which is the same as milk (*Somenādityā balinah*, RV. X. 85.1). This Soma as the vastest universal principle conceivable to extend in total space and time, is known in the Vedas Brahmaṇaspati. Its purifying sieve is spread all over through which its thousand-fold streams are percolating into centres of Yajña like our Sūrya. Looking through the symbol language, the idea is that the reservoir of universal energy is emptying itself into myriad streams which poured themselves into the individualised centres of energy like each Sūrya. From every direction, from every source, through all times, and in all places, this flood is gushing and rushing (*Pavitraṁ te vitataṁ Brahmaṇaspate parabhur-gātrāṇī paryeshi viśvataḥ*, RV. IX. 83. 1 ).

WATERS—The flood is the ocean, the waters, as the substratum of Agni. The best repository of heat or temperature can be water, which preserves it for a much longer time than any other material medium like earth and metal. Fire existed in the womb of water of infinity implies that the highly charged temperature of

Agni became equally distributed in the universal substratum and thus its individual centres were disintegrated or dispersed to mingle with the infinite. This limitless substratum is conceived of as *parama vymoman* i.e. the Infinite Space or the boundless ocean, *Samudram* or something that is beyond all conceptions of time and measurement (*anapinaddha*, RV. VI. 72. 4). The Vedas refer to it as Parameshṭhī, i.e. the universal, which is also conceived of as the Infinite Mother or Virāj namely a condition which existed prior to the creation of individual boundaries or *Kendra*. That Parameshṭhī is conceived of as Soma or *Ṛita*.

ṚITA AND SATYA—The distinction between *Ṛita* and *Satya* is vital to Vedic thought. Whereas *Ṛita* is the infinite universal, formless like water and having no particular centre, Satya is individuated form each having a centre regulating its system. In Vedic symbolism Ṛita is Parameshṭhī (*Ṛitam eva parameshṭhī*) and *Satya* is Sūrya. Both *Ṛita* and *Satya* are spoken of as Yajña, the first referring to the supreme mind, the plane of pure ideation and the second to the principle of mind manifesting in matter. These are two relative conditions the one preceding the other. The second Yajña can become possible only by the potential power of the first Yajña. This is what is intended by the Gods performing one Yajña with the other Yajña (*Yajñena yajñam ayajanta devāḥ*, RV. X. 90.16). The matter is simple. There can be no indivi-

dual creation without a preexistant universal in which the manifest worlds have their abode or an undifferentiated source (*Yatra viśvam bhavatyekanīḍam*). These two laws of *Ṛita* and *Satya* came into existence in the beginning, when the creator addressed himself to the supreme task of world-building (*Ṛitaṁ cha satyaṁ chābhīddhāt tapaso' adhya jāyata*, RV. X. 190.1). What is called Ṛita and Satya, the two relative principles manifesting in the universal corresponds to Soma and Agni in the individual. From the point of view of symbolism it is the two principles that are important and by which we find ourselves time and again face to face with the fundamental dichotomy of creation.

AGNI AND SOMA OR ŚIVA AND PĀRVATĪ—In Indian iconography and cult worship, Agni and Soma are represented as Śiva and Pārvatī. This is a condition of amity between the two when Śiva enters into physical union and offers a place to his consort as one-half of his own body. This is the *Ardhanārīśvara* form of image. This is referred to in the Ṛigveda as the friendship of Agni and Soma (*Agnir jāgāra tamayam soma āha tavāham asmi sakhye nyokāḥ*, RV. V. 44.5). This condition relates to the manifest creation where life is reproduced by the union of the male and the female principles. The two latter are symbolised as Dyāvā-Pṛithivī and whatever exists between heaven and earth must have these two parents, namely, all

life is *Maithunī Sṛishṭi*. But in the unmanifest Śiva or Agni is a mere Liṅgam i. e. a sign or symbol of life without body or sense organs. In this condition the eternal life principle is an infinite Pillar of life, Jyotir-liṅgam, to which time and space have no application. But even this great light as energy must be fed by the *Amṛitam* or immortal sap which is Soma. It is to exemplify this transcendent conception of Agni and Soma, the Liṅga form in the temples is bathed by trickling drops of Soma from a jar suspended above it. In both the eniconic and the anthropomorphic forms of Śiva-Rudra worship, the union of Agni and Soma, is illustrated through an elaborate cult symbolism.

AGNI = RUDRA—The equation that Agni is Rudra is repeated many times in the Brāhmaṇas and also in the Ṛigveda (*tvam agne rudro asuraḥ*, II. 1. 6). This Rudra in the eyes of the seers is the same as Sūrya. Rudra is spoken of as the healer by sipping water (*Jalāshabheshaja*). Rudra is the fiery principle needing the river of Soma, i.e. Gaṅgā, on his head to keep himself refrigerated or propitiated. Gaṅgā is symbolically spoken of as the flood of heaven descending from the region of Parameshṭhī, and she is the visible form of Soma and Amṛitam. The meaning is clear. In the case of Rudra as Sūrya, the cosmic phenomenon of the drinking of Soma by Agni is witnessed through his thousand rays. Wherever there is moisture, it is drawn by the heat in the rays of the sun (*Divaṁ*

*jinvanty-agnayaḥ*, RV. I. 164. 51). Sūrya is the same as Indra as explained in the Vedic Mantras and also in the Brāhmaṇas. The Ṛigveda speaks of Sūrya as the light in heaven upheld by Indra (*Yadā sūryam amuṁ divi śukraṁ jyotir adhārayaḥ*, RV. VIII. 12. 30 ; *Indraḥ sūryam arochayat*, RV. VIII. 3. 6 ; also III. 34. 9, III. 34. 4). Sūrya or Indra is none else than Agni. The Ṛigveda speaks of Agni having manifested itself as Sūrya for the sake of all men (*Avir ebhyo abhavat sūryo nṛīn*, RV. I. 146. 4 ; *Sa indro bhūtvā tapati madhyamo divam*, AV. 13. 3. 13). It is clearly said that what is Agni at night becomes Sūrya rising at dawn (*Mūrdhā bhuvo bhavati naktam agnis-tataḥ sūrryo jāyate prātr-udyan*, RV. X. 88. 6). On this basis, we may understand the symbolism associated with Indra drinking Soma. Indra's life and power and all his glory in overpowering the Asuras depend on his drinking the Soma juice. It is the same union of Agni and Soma. The two relative principles which, although independent, must stand unified and coherent, otherwise the whole divine order of Yajña is disrupted.

SOMA RITUALS-THEIR DEEPER MEANING—The process of fetching Soma from the forest on a cart, giving it ceremonial reception, washing, pounding, crushing its shoots, extracting its juice, cleansing it through a sieve or woollen cloth, filling it in a jar and in cups, mixing milk and drinking it, belongs to an elaborate ritual in the Yajñas ; its esoteric significance,

however, is transparent and can be read in the light of what is happening in the cosmos and within the human body in order to strengthen and increase the life principle or the creative energy by supplying it with its sustenance. In this light, all food that is eaten is Soma, all the plants and animals are but forms of Soma. They form, as organic matter, the food of the Vaiśvānara, fire within the body, which becomes hungry and cries for food like the new-born babe. It must be fed and after a time fed again, continuing the chain throughout life. This is what is implied in Indra or the central vital principle (*Madhya Prāṇa*, ŚB. 6. 1. 1. 1), or in modern terms the metabolic life-principle being kept alive with food or Soma. The drinking of Soma by Indra is writ large on the visage of all creation wherever life is throbbing within the body or energies functioning on the plane of manifestation. The myth of Indra, as well as Agni, drinking Some is nothing else but the irrepressible life-principle incarnating eternally in matter and with insatiable appetite opening its jaws for food. In Vedic symbolism it is voracious Agni, always hungry for the fuel-sticks which are numbered and measured when the fire is kindled in the altar, but which burns up the whole forest when it is uncontrolled and unharnessed. Agni is made radiant by the fuel given to it, otherwise its form is dark and it becomes extinct when starved of its food. The food of Agni or of Indra or of Sūrya or of any kind of power or energy may in short be termed as Soma, whatever be its form.

Agni which is the main stay of the physical body will also consume it if it does not get its supply of daily ration from outside. It begins by eating up the vital parts of the body until death ensues. The metabolic fire within the organism must be healthy and buoyant in order to keep the whole system and each individual cell pulsating with life. If the same Agni becomes surfeited with Soma which it cannot digest, it becomes ill and then also the body cannot function properly. The entire organism is disturbed. The various systems like the respiratory, circulatory, digestive, excretory, are thrown out of order and the metabolic fire is unable to cope with the demands of the physical and vital systems, leading also to the disturbance of the psychic functionings. It is, therefore, the balance of Agni and Soma which Mother Nature has designed and established within each individual centre that maintains life at its best. The pulsating buoyant life force is the result of Agni and Some retaining their balanced union which, in Vedic terms, is the order of Yajña. Agni is *Satya* to which Soma as *Ṛita* comes and the two together perform a veritable Yajña. Wherever animal or plant life subsists, the pattern of this basic Yajña must be there. Agni is therefore rightly called the deity of Yajña (*Yajñasya devam*, RV. I. 1. 1). In the Upanishads, *Prāṇa* and *Rayi* are stated to be a couple in which *Prāṇa* corresponds to Agni and *Rayi* to Soma. Agni eats *Rayi* and gives *Posha* or nutrition,

i. e. the nutrient element of physical and vital functions (*Agninā rayim aśnavat poshameva dive dive*, RV. I. 1. 3). What infinite nature has ordained as the law of life must be honoured by each individual and from day to day. No life can exist without its *Posha* or nutrition, and if this is the basic law of conscious life within the body, it must be existing for the working of the whole cosmos and in its source where both Agni and Soma or Satya and Ṛita exist as an eternal concommitant pair.

SOMA, ITS FOUR KINDS—The ninth Maṇḍala of the Ṛigveda is devoted to the glorification of Soma, the great mother principle, source of all creation and mainstay of its sustenance. The Ṛigveda is a document of Agni-Vidyā and would not be complete without an adequaie text on Soma-Vidyā. A critical analysis of the Soma doctrine from the point of view of its cosmic significance in the creative process as well as its biological functioning and its supreme place as the Mother Principle would reveal what in essence the Vedic Ṛishis had envisaged as Soma-Vidyā. Soma may be said to be of four kinds, namely, (1) *Aṁśu*, (shoots); (2) *Graha* (cups); (3) *Rāja* (King, the radiant one); and (4) *Vāja* (energy, the life sap). If we analyse the four concepts of Soma, we may understand the very many meanings which are associated with Soma.

(1) AṀŚU SOMA—In the first instance, Soma is *Aṁśu*, that includes all the plants, trees, cereals,

physical bodies of men and animals, which are also like the shoots of a tree, including all organic eatables. We may in this light understand why the Gītā defines Soma as the sap of all the herbs or plants, which term includes also the animals and men, for their process of life-growth and death is exactly the same as that of the plant (*Pushṇāmi chaushadhīḥ sarvāḥ somo bhūtvā rasātmakaḥ*, Gītā, XV.13; *sasyamiva martyaḥ pachyate sasyamivājāyate punaḥ*, KU. I. 1. 6). In this single word *Aṁśu*, an off-shoot, a germ, a leaf, a branch, a tree, everything invested with life in a physical form becomes included. The little blade of grass (*Tṛiṇa* of the story in the *Kena Up.*) is a symbol of matter which is *green* with the sap of life, and is not different from the leaf (*Parṇa*) of the mighty Aśvattha, or the tree of existence (Kath. Up. II.3.1 and Gītā XV. 1.). This tree has dense foliage on which the mighty god of life and also of death, the great Yama, sits and drinks Soma (*Yasmin vṛikshe supalāśe devaiḥ sampibate yamaḥ*, RV. X.135.1). The Aṁśu Soma, whatever be its form, should be purchased or acquired by paying its price and should be brought to the place of sacrifice where it is to be offered to Agni, its friend who will welcome it, digest it and assimilate it for producing the *Posha* or the nutrient factor of life. It is then subjected to an elaborate process of crushing and pulverising and being passed through a sieve is collected in a jar and

cups for drinking. Here begins the next phase in the life story ot Soma.

(2) GRAHA SOMA—Then comes the second phase of Soma, viz. *Graha*, which literally means the cup. According to the Ṛigveda, the number of these cups was 36 + 4 (*shaṭtrimśāmścha chaturaḥ kalpayantaḥ*, RV. X.114.6). The number of 36 is said to be that of the cups in the *Agnishṭoma* Yajña and of the additional four in the *Atyagnishṭoma*. A detailed description of these names and functions and also the symbolical esoteric meaning of these cups or Grahas is given in the Yajurveda (Book VII) and in the corresponding portions of the Śatapatha and Taittirīya Brāhmaṇas and also in a short form in the Aitareya. Suffice it to say here that the first cup called *Upāṁśu* refers to that which was the nearest shoot of the cosmic tree as it came to germinate in the mind of the Creator. It is said to be omnipotent: 'Self made art thou from all the Powers that are in heaven and on the earth (*Pārthiva divya indriya*, VS. 7.3). May the Mind win thee, thee, all, hail Sūrya, O Thou nobly born. Thee for the Deities who sip light atoms (*Marīchipa deva*).' (Griffith's trans. of the Yajurveda, VII. 3). Here the Gods sipping light atoms are Prāṇas, the vital powers which create or become manifest as consciousness and control the vital and the physical bodies. Why are they called light sipping? The Ṛishis speak of Three Lights

(*Tri-rochanā, Trīṇi jyotīṁshi*, RV. V. 29. 1, IV. 53. 5; VS. 8.36) and these three radiant ones are none else than the three great principles of Mind, Life and Matter, expressed through a multiplicity of symbols as frequently explained before. Their leading types are the three Devas—Agni, Vāyu and Āditya, who are archetypal in all creation. Amongst these three Mind (*Dyaus, Manas*) and Matter (*Pṛithivī, Vāk* or the five *Bhūtas*) are like parents, each incomplete in itself but producing in mutual union the child, which is Prāṇa or Life incarnate as consciousness in matter. Within our own body how this creative process of maintaining life and producing ever fresh energy is being maintained may be understood in terms of the vital functions. It is in one word Prāṇāḥ or Indriyāṇi which refer not so much to the external sense organs as to the internal powers rooted in their systems with combined physiological and psychological functionings and structures. It is a most complicated process by which the vital chemistry of the body or organism working under the general control of the life-principle is receiving gross food and converting it into firstly the various secretions which are also material and subsequently into vital energy which is non-material and is Prāṇa. The transformation of Bhūta into Prāṇa is a miracle happening within each body by powers which are most wonderful and which, as in the Yajurveda cited above, are both of heaven and earth, namely, non-

material and material, or vital and physical (*Divya* and *Pārthiva*). These powers are sense organs, seemingly different but in their source unified deriving their energy and direction from a common vital centre, which is graphically called *Madhya Prāṇa*, explained as *Indha* or the Fiery Principle, that has been given the esoteric name Indra (*Sa yo'yaṁ madhye prāṇaḥ; esha evendraḥ tenesha prāṇān madhyato indriyeṇ-ainddha, yadainddha tasmādindha, tendhoha vai tam indra ityāchakshate parokshaṁ*, ŚB. 6.1.1.2). The sense organs with their respective vital and physiological functions are the so-called cups in which Soma is drunk or absorbed in the body. There is no other power by which physical Soma having the external form of shoots or herbs, i.e. food, can be transformed into vital energy through the medium of the body. Here is witnessed the miraculous phenomenon of life acting on matter creating new life out of it. The whole process of the minute disintegration of the particles of food or physical Soma and transforming them into energy or *Indriya-Soma* is dramatised symbolically in the Soma Sacrifice. The most essential feature is its crushing by the two Pressing Stones (*Grāvāṇau*), which are none else but the two Clashing Rocks of Prāṇa and Apāna, which remain in perpetual collision, moving backward and forward and thus supplying dynamism to the wonderful mechanism of the body equipped with a thousand gears.

Some count the sense organs as five, others as seven, others again as ten, but in fact their number is beyond counting and a variety of computation is naturally admissible from the point of view of our looking at things either from the subtle to the gross or from the gross to the subtle (*Śiromūlā dṛishṭi, pādamūlā dṛishṭi*).

(3) RĀJĀ SOMA—Soma is also called *Rājā*, which means both a king and the radiant one. This is the third stage of Soma. In the first stage when Soma is a shoot having a material form, as explained above, it refers to the principle of matter or the gross physical body, called *Vāk* or the *Pañchabhūtas*. In the second stage, Soma as *Graha*, refers to the vital principle of Prāṇa produced by the assimilation of *Aṁśu* or food in material form. In the third stage, Soma represents the principle of mind which is higher than that of Prāṇa or the vital functionings of the body. It is the same as *Manas*. The first step of the ladder which is gross and visible is *Vāk*, the second which is subtle and invisible is *Prāṇa*, and the third which is still more subtle and refined is *Manas*. The first is the Physical Man, the second is the Vital Man and the third is the Psychic Man. Each individual is the composite form of these three persons (*Tri-Purusha*), each of them being conceived of as a Pura, City and hence there are three Cities (*Tripura*), which are all integrated into one or mythically speaking, pierced by a single shaft from the bow of Rudra when he becomes master of all the three. *Aṁśu-Graha-Rājā*,

this is the formula which may be expressed either as Tri-purusha or Tri-pura or the three states of consciousness, called the waking state, dream state and deep sleep state (*Jāgrat-Svapna-Sushupti*). Why the mind is called *Rājā*, the king, is plain enough, since it is the principle of mind which is the centre of individuation and which controls, governs and regulates the entire system of which it is the focus and in a true sense the generator and ordainer. There is nothing higher than the mind and it is the king of its dominion, namely, the body of the individual person. The Vedas also speak of a cosmic mind which creates the cosmos, which existed in the beginning as the mind of the Creator (*Kāmas-tadagre samavartatādhi manaso retaḥ prathamaṁ yadāsīt*, RV. X.129.4). The world emanates from that cosmic mind which is the thought of Prajāpati and which transforms as the cosmos. The universe, is, therefore, spoken of as the Wish-fulfilling Yajña of the Creator (*Kamapra-Yajña*). Mind or *Manas* is the first principle in creation and inheres at the centre of each organic manifestation as its nucleus in which all the laws of life and ordinances of concretion have their being for so long as the organism is to endure. The principle of mind is the same as Soma (*Somo rājā mastishkaḥ*, AV. 9. 7.2). It is also called the Moon, for the Moon is the symbol of the mind of the Creator (*Chandramā manso jātaḥ*, RV. X. 90. 13). When they speek of the Moon as placed on the head

of Śiva, it is the immortal principle of the mind, the death-conquering principle of mental illumination that is intended. It is the same as consciousness. We may thus understand the adage repeated about the Brāhmaṇas 'Soma is our *Rājā*' (*Somo asmākaṁ Brāhmaṇānāṁ Rājā*). It is Rājā Soma, that is the resplendent principle of the mind or thought which is the sovereign principle of Brahmahood. Soma is the symbol of *Brahma* or *Rasa*, that is spiritual authority, and the earthly king or Kshatra is the symbol of *Bala* or temporal power. Whereas in the realm every one of the subjects has to submit to the principle of force, it is the Brāhmaṇa or the self-illumined and free mind who proclaims that for him the law-giver is Soma, viz. the mind itself, as it is decoding or translating the supreme law of the universe for itself.

There are two meanings of the word *Rajā*, a king and a Yaksha. The mind is called a Yaksha of mysterious nature (*Yad apūrvaṁ yaksham antaḥ prajānāṁ tanme manaḥ śiva-saṁkalpam astu*, VS. 34.2). What is Yaksha ? It is a light, some kind of mysterious illumination which shines and becomes obscure like the fire-fly glowing and dimming alternately. Such is the mind which now rushes into thought and then is withdrawn into its centre. It is both a glow and dim, i.e. like the Moon waving and waxing with the twin principles of light and darkness respectively. In each dark half of the month, there is light and in each

bright half there is darkness. From this point of view the mind is designated as *Jyotiḥ* (*Jyotishāṁ jyotirekaṁ tanme manaḥ*, VS. 34.1). As a matter of fact in the constitution of man the Vedas speak of three lights, viz., Matter, Life and Mind, of which mind is the illuminator of the other two and, therefore, rightly spoken of as the best of them or literally as the light of lights. Each person is said to be as sixteen-fold (*Shoḍaśin*) and he is composed of fifteen parts plus one part which is the sixteenth. The first fifteen are again comprised of three each, being multiplied by five. This numerical symbolism is patent and clear. The three are Mind, Life and Matter. Mind or *Manas* is five-fold represented as the five sheaths or the *Pañchakoshas* within the body, explained in the Upanīshads as the *Pañchakosha Vidyā*, namely, *Anna* (Gross body), *Prāṇa* (Vital body), *Manas* (Mind), *Vijñāna* (Consciousness) and *Ānanda* (Bliss). These five are emboxed one within the other and are spoken of as a *Vasudhāna kosha*, i.e. the jewel-chest. The second of the three lights is Prāṇa, which is well-known as being five-fold. The third is *Vāk*, which is but another name of the *Pañchabhūtas* or the Five Gross Elements. It should be clearly understood that *Vāk* or Sound is the attribute of *Ākāśa* which is the most suttle of the five Bhūtas, and therefore in the choice of one symbol for all the five *Vāk* was selected as the most natural symbol. *Vāk* or speech or sound is as much material as any of the other four Bhūtas, and we are

informed that of all forms of energy, sound alone requires a material medium for transmission. Thus the three lights, each having five rays as it were together stand for fifteen, which are the constituents of each individual centre of manifestation. The sixteenth is the unmanifest source from which these three, each with five-fold digitation, emanate. The whole Purusha is thus said to be *Shoḍaśī Prajāpati* or *Shoḍaśī Indra* for whom oblations are offered in the Yajña. The mysterious principle of coherence which keeps these sixteen together is symbolised as the sixteen-fold cups for drinking Soma (*Shoḍaśī graha*).

(4) VĀJA SOMA—The fourth kind of Soma which is the highest is named *Vāja*. It is pure and absolute consciousness, the undifferentiated power which explodes into the trinitarian forms mentioned above. The whole life process is the manifestation of *Vāja* or the birth of consciousness described as *Vājasya prasava*. The principle of *Vāja* is even higher than that of *Manas*. It may be spoken of as *Vijñana*, i.e. transcendent consciousness which is reflected within the body as mind. It is spoken of as the pure light (*Ātapa*) of which the shadow (*Chhāyā*) is material manifestation. Light is pure resplendence and there can be no shadow until and unless it is intercepted by matter. The doctrine of *Ātapa* and *Chhāyā*, of light and shadow, was well known in Vedic thought. It is the single *Ṛita* in the universal

which becomes bifurcated as light and shadow for the sake of creation, the one related to the other and both being inseparable. From this point of view *Vāja* is the highest principle being the source of even the mind with its two wings of life and matter. The latter are the Three Birds (*Trisuparṇa*), which reach in their flight the region of immortality and from there transport the jar of Soma to the earth or plane of matter. The significance of *Vāja* is indicated in the *Vājapeya* sacrifice, literally the Yajña where *Vāja* is the potion to be sipped by the Brāhmaṇas. Whereas the *Rājasūya* is for those who move on the lower plane of power or force, the *Vājapeya* is for those who are devoted to the spiritual principle of Brahmahood. The *Vājapeya* is, therefore, called a *Brāhma-Sava*. The deity of *Vājapeya* is Brahmaṇaspati. Both Vāja and Soma or like the two aspects of a single *humidus radicle*, the original sap or milk of the Mother Cow, Virāj, which is universal Nature itself.

SOMA SPOKEN OF VARIOUSLY AS MĀTĀ, ṚITA, AMṚITA, MASTISHKA, PRĀṆA, ANNA, MADHU, ŚUKRA ETC.—Thus, the several meanings of Soma, its varieties, and the different rituals associated with it have a distinct place in the formulation of Vedic symbols. For the Ṛishis it was quite in order to speak of Soma as *Mātā* (Mother Principle), *Ṛita* (the formless Universal), *Amṛita* (the immortal soul), *Mastishka*, (*Manas* (Mind), *Prāṇa* (Life-principle), *Anna* (Food), *Dugdha*, (Milk of the uni-

versal cow), *Madhu* (Mead), *Śukra* (Seed), etc. The word *Madhu* denoting Mead or Honey, refers to the great principle of Bliss, *Ānanda*, which as the final beatitude refers to the ultimate substratum of all existence, for *Ānandam* is Brahma itself and there is nothing higher than Brahma or *Ānanda*. The space is filled with *Ānandam* and no one would be able to breathe or live without this enveloping ocean of *Ānanda*, both within and without. Each morsel of food is a pleasure, and a wave of bliss coming to us as a passing experience, but the same is eternal in Brahman as the source of all. The best definition of the world possible from the point of view of pure spiritual experience is that the whole manifestation is a Wave of Bliss, surging from an infinite ocean, as the Ṛigveda puts it—*Samudrād ūrmir madhumān udārad upāṁśunā sam amṛitatvam ānaṭ*, (RV. IV. 58.1), i.e. from the ocean sprang a wave of sweetness ; it was the sap which converted the *Upāṁsu* shoot of Soma into *Amṛita*. Three principles are involved here. Firstly, the infinite ocean from which a wave of bliss as this creation with all its heavenly and earthly forms has sprung. Secondly, the cosmos is a shoot of the primeaval tree which is Brahman himself and, therefore, it is sustained and kept green by the sweet sap, which existed in the source. Thirdly, the nature of that sap in the shoot is immortality (*Amṛitam*). Thus, the phenomena of immortality, bliss and infinity belong

to both Brahman as the ultimate Soma or the creative source of the universe and the same Triad is becoming manifest in each centre of life. What is Soma or Madhu was symbolised by the sweet cake (*Apūpa*) of the two Aśvins who are masters of the mystery of Soma-Vidyā revealed to them by Indra. Prāṇa and Apāna are the two Aśvins, the divine physicians keeping the body in perfect health and vitality and the sweet cake which they are nibbling every moment is Breath (*Prāṇa*), Life or vitality which is the greatest joy for everyone. In fact, nature has so designed that honey or sugar is the main fuel which keeps the metabolic fire (*Vaiśvānara*) in the body burning and whatever food is eaten must be changed into fine sugar acceptable to the vital functions by the chemistry of the body. These are physiological facts of which the substance is that Prāṇa or physical energy depends on the sweetness that exist in all foods as its immortal essence. According to the Vedic doctrine food consists of *Dadhi* (the gross form), *Ghṛita* (the fire or energy within it) and thirdly *Madhu* or sweetness i.e. the immortal life-giving essence).

SOMA AS ANNA, PRĀṆA AND ĀNANDA—Soma at different levels is all three, viz. gross food ((*Anna*), vitality (*Prāṇa*) and Bliss (*Ananda*). It is the source of the three different forms of energy. The Ṛishis, therefore, speak of Soma as the seed or the fecundating energy of Stallion or the cosmic horse, that is yoked

to the cosmic car as well as to that of the human body. That horse is Agni and Soma is its vitalising principle or essence or seed (*Ayam soma vṛishno aśvasya retaḥ*, RV. I. 164.25). The horse and the seed are identical principles and both were born from the churning of the primeaval ocean. The cosmos was created from the seed of this universal horse, i. e., the Sun or *Kāla* or *Saṁvatsara*, and is being continued by it. Such is the unity of Agni and Soma (*Agnīshomātmakaṁ jagat, Agnīshomīyaṁ paśum*).

SOMA IDENTIFIED WITH ŚUKRA OR RETAS—Looking at the several meanings of Soma, as given in the Brāhmaṇas, one of the most important is the identification of Soma with *Śukra* or *Retas*, viz. the fecundating seed or virile principle symbolised as father (*Reto vai somaḥ*, ŚB. 1.9.2.9, 2.5.19, 3.8.5.2; RV. I. 164.35). The Soma ritual in the sacrifice has been planned to correspond with the vital-physiological process within the body which is digesting the food and through a series of secretions ultimately producing the germinal fluid, the sperm in man and the ovum in the woman, both of which are the two essential units for creating new life. From this point of view, it would be correct to speak of Soma as including all the secretions and chemical solutions like blood, fatness, etc. distilled by the bodily temperature into finer and finer essences until we get the cerebro-spinal fluid which saturates the central nervous system and

the brain and produces the light called the Mind (*Mano jyotiḥ*. In this aspect, Soma is said to have a relative principle called *Surā*. At first *Surā* is produced which, by further distillation, becomes more refined as Soma. It is also valid in Vedic symbology to speak of *Sūra*.or the wine as the physical sap and Soma its transformation into the subtle principle of Mind. Therefore, *Surā* is *Prāṇa* and Soma is *Manas*.

The essential basis of Vedic symbolism is that the human body is a Yajña and so also the cosmos is a Yajña. Both depend on the mingling of Agni with Soma, viz. the fiery principle of energy and the watery principle of food, or on the biological plane the union of the father and the mother as the two parents of all living creatures.

# Lecture V

## HRIDAYA-VIDYĀ

PRINCIPLE OF HṚIDAYA—*Hṛidaya* literally is heart. The heart is an important organ in the body which by its contraction and expansion is responsible for the circulation of blood in all arteries, tissues, veins and capillaries in the organism. The diastolic and systolic beating of the heart is not fortuitious but the most effective demonstration of the overall creative process manifested as a rhythmic movement. That is exactly the nature of Prajāpati manifesting as life or Prāṇa, i. e. a force visualised in matter as extension and withdrawal (*Samañchana- prasāraṇa*, Ś B.8.1.4.10). What, therefore, is a mere organ for pumping blood has been accepted as the foremost of all the vital principles and as the centre of the stream of life. Therefore, the Heart (*Hṛidaya*) was accepted as the visible symbol of Prajāpati. So long as there is throbbing in the Heart, life exists in a visible form. The secret of the Heart is the rhythmic dilating and that is also the secret of Prajāpati or Agni or Time (*Saṁvatsara*), or of all energy which functions within an organised system from a central point or focus. The *Hṛidaya* was thus the symbol of the centre in its two-fold aspects, viz. the centre which is beyond the

conception of time and space, i.e. which has no length, no breadth and no thickness, and is the unmanifest source of all things. The other is the geometrical point which is hypothetically conceived of as representing the absolute. To the Vedic Seers the *Hṛidaya* symbolises both aspects. In its transcendent form it is called *Amṛita* and in its manifest form it is *Mṛityu*.

VEDIC WORD NĀBHI—The Vedic word for *Hṛidaya* is *Nābhi* and the transcendent source of manifestation is called *Amṛitasya nābhiḥ*. The doctrine of the Navel (*Nābhi*) is often mentioned in the Ṛigveda where the unmanifest source is referred to as *Nābhi* and its manifest form as *Bandhu*; the former is the Father and the latter is Mother (*Dyauḥ pitā janitā nābhir atra, bandhur me mātā pṛithivī mahīyam*, RV. I. 164. 33). Thus the immortal universal principle corresponds to the Navel and the manifest form born out of it to the innumerable relationships.

KA PRAJĀPATI—The unmanifest source is spoken of as Ka Prajāpati, i. e. the one who is unknowable, a question, a mystery about whom nothing can be predicated. This is called *guhya*, *apīchya*, the hidden or concealed source. In the Brāhmaṇas, Prajāpati is said to be two-fold, viz. *Anirukta* and *Nirukta* (Unknowable and Knowable), *Amūrta* and *Mūrta* (Unmanifest and Manifest). The unmanifest is silence (*Tūshṇīm*) and the manifest is speech (*Vāk*). In the ritual of the sacrifice, whenever an oblation is

intended for Prajāpati in his unmanifest form, the offering is made without audible utterance of the Mantra which is repeated only in the Heart. This idea of the unmanifest source as Prajāpati is the burden of the Hiraṇyagarbha Sūkta of the Ṛigveda (X. 1.21) in which the Ṛishi repeatedly asks the question, 'Whom shall we propitiate by this offering of ours (*Kasmai devāya havishā vidhema*). Ka is the symbol of interrogation, the great Question or the eternal mystery called *Saṁpraśna* (*Taṁ sampraśnaṁ bhuvanā yantyanya* RV. X. 82. 3). Ka is both a question and an answer. The mystery of creation is a question, with the answer also inherent in it. Thus Ka as an interrogative pronoun means 'Who ?' but the answer is Ka, i. e. Prajāpati, who certainly himself is the solution to the problem of creation. As he is, so is his work. Both are equally deep and both are to an extent known and to an extent unknown. It is said in the Ṛigveda that the Daughters of Heaven are neither completely robed nor unrobed (*avasānānagnā*, RV. III.1.6), i. e. the meaning or mystery of life and creation is partially within the range of comprehension and partially beyond it.

THE DIVINE PRINCIPLE IN EACH CENTRE—It is stated in the Gītā that Īśvara or the divine principle resides in the Heart of all beings (*Īśvaraḥ sarvabhūtānaṁ hṛiddeśerjuna tishṭhati*, Gītā, 18. 61). *Hṛiddeśa* is the same as *Hṛidaya* and refers to the divine immortal

centre of each individual in his mortal manifestation which we see as the living organism. Wherever there is life on the material plane it is linked to an unmanifest source and the two are respectively conceived of as mortal and immortal, as earthly and heavenly. The immortal aspect is symbolised as *Hṛidaya* which becomes manifest as the three-fold principle of Mind, Life and Matter (*Manas, Prāṇa, Vāk*). The former is symbolised as the Thumb-sized Man (*Aṅgushṭha Purusha*) and the latter as the Eye Man (*Chākshusha Purusha*). The former is compared to a flame of smokeless light (*Jyotir iva adhūmakaḥ*, KU. 4.13) and the latter, as the name suggests, is the person reflected in the pupil of the eye, whom we see in flesh and blood and who combines in a composite form the three Persons, viz. the Psychic, Vital and Physical Beings. The *Aṅgushṭha Purusha* is conceived of as detached from its outer shell and is compared to a thin blade of grass hidden within its sheath (*muñjād iva ishīkām*).

REST AND MOTION—The principle of *Hṛidaya* in its unmanifest aspect becomes effective and manifest as the three-fold entity. It is the latter which in particular is the object of *Hṛidaya-Vidyā*, as expounded in the Brāhmaṇas. It has been said that the movement of the Heart is a rhythmic pulsation which implies two aspects of movement, namely, a forward movement and a backward movement. These are

known as *Gati* and *Agati*, namely, centrifugal and centripetal movements. These two are related and can only be experienced against a substratum of rest. The three are inseparable and must exist in every centre where force is active. These are symbolised as the three Devas, Brahmā for rest (*sthiti*), Indra for centrifugal force (*Gati*) and Vishṇu for centripetal force (*Agati*). Brahmā is identified with the principle of stasis (*Stithi*, also called *Pratishṭhā*, (*Brahmā haivāsya sarvasya pratishṭhā*). These three correspond to the three letters of the word *Hṛi-Da-Ya*, that is to say *Hṛi* to Vishṇu from *āharaṇa*, the force coming to the centre; *Da* to Indra, i.e. the force going away from the centre (*do avakhaṇḍane*); and *Ya* to Brahmā, i. e. *yamayati*, the principle which controls or regulates the two others. Thus the word *Hṛidaya* is taken to be the symbol of the triply constituted forces emanating from the centre. This is just a way of creating a symbol and attaching the meaning to the letters of the alphabet making up the word *Hṛi-da-ya*. Although the word *Hṛidaya* does not occur in the Ṛigveda, but the doctrine is found there. When it is said that Indra yokes the two bay steeds to his chariot and the name of the two horses is given as *Ṛik* and *Sāma*, the meaning is the same. Indra represents the centre and *Ṛik* the diameter and Sāma the circumference. Thus, a complete system of the integration of three forces, viz. that of Rest (*Stithi*), of *Gati* (Movement away from

the centre) and *Āgati* (movement from the circumference back to the centre) is implied. The chariot of Indra will stand stationary unless the two aspects of motion, symbolised as the two horses, is associated with it. It is specifically stated that the car is moving by the power of *Ṛik* and *Sāma* (*Ṛik-sāmābhyāṁ pra rathaṁ vartayanti*, RV. X. 114.6).

ṚIK, YAJUS AND SĀMAN—As explained in an earlier lecture on Agni-Vidyā, the Ṛik represents the diameter and the Sāma its extension by the application of movement. On the two sides of the central point two more points are added and by a succession of such points on either side (*Vimimāna ṛikvabhiḥ*, RV. I. 155.6), a line is described, which, at every point of its extension, serves as the base or diameter, to form a *Maṇḍala* or circumference. Whatever be the extension or measure of the line that forms a Piṇḍa or Mūrti of determined size as stated in the Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa (*Ṛigbhyo jātaṁ sarvaśo mūrtimāhuḥ*, TB. 3.12.9.1). The power that gives dynamism or movement to the centre is symbolised as *Yajus* (*sarvāgattir yājushī haiva śaśvat*, TB. 3.12.9.1). The circumference or *Maṇḍala* is identified with Tejas because wherever there is light, a halo is formed round it and this is symbolised as *Sāman* (*sarvaṁ tejaḥ sāma-rūpyaṁ ha śaśvat*,

* ऋचा मूर्तिर्याजुषी गतिः साममयन्तेजः, GB. 1.2.9, is a very clear enunciation of the Trayī doctrine in terms of the principle of Motion underlying all Forms (*mūrti*).

TB. 3.12.9.1).* This system of *Ṛik*, *Yajus* and *Sāma* is the essence of *Hṛidaya-Vidyā*. It is the conception of a pulsating centre which although itself is stable, forms the substratum for the interplay of two opposite forces, the centrifugal symbolised as *Da* and the centripetal as *Hṛi*. These three aspects are spoken of as Brahmā, Indra and Vishṇu being the three Devas, or *Satva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas* being the three Guṇas, and through many other varying symbols. The basic idea is that each created object in its manifest from emanates from an unmanifest source which is its *Hṛidaya*. This is true of both the cosmos and the individual. The unmanifest source is named as *Nābhi* or *Nabhya Prajāpati* and the manifest worlds as *Mahimā Prajāpati*. Each Deva has these two forms, viz. as abiding in the centre as *Ka* (*Katamo devaḥ*) and extending outside as *Mahimā*. The cosmos is *Mahimā* and the source is the Ka or transcendent Purusha. Both are interrelated most intimately as effect and cause, as matter and energy, as *Bhūta* and *Prāṇa*, as *Sat* and *Asat*, as *Mṛityu* and *Amṛita*, etc..

VĀMANA AND VIRĀṬ—This conception is exemplified in the legend of Vishṇu who first appears as a

* According to the अहिर्बुध्न्य संहिता, 10.14-16, परमव्योम = स्थितिभाव = आद्य-भगवद्रूप, which by the creative will of Vishṇu measures out the worlds ; a two-fold nature of the Divine wheel is postulated, स्थितिमयचक्र and प्रमाणरूपचक्र.

dwarf (*Vāmana*) and later assumes a cosmic form (*Bṛihat śarīra*, RV. I. 155.6). Vāmana and Vishṇu are like the two poles of a single field maintaining a constant oscillation between the one end and the other, similar to the negative and positive poles of an electrical charge. According to the Vedic doctrine, no life is possible without this duality and the duality itself appears in its divergence on a stable substratum which remains unmodified.

PRAJĀPATI AND HIS IMAGE—This conception is illustrated by many words, e.g. *Ka*, *Amṛitam*, *Nābhi*, *Ūrdhva*, *Aja*, *Ekam*, *Parokṣha*, *Avyakta*, *Amūrta*, *Anirukta*, *Arūpa*, *Avarṇa*, etc.. Whatever is in the manifest cosmos, also exists in the source in an unmanifest form. This establishes the supreme law of Cause and Effect. Prajāpati is completely imaged in his creation, namely, the cosmos. As Creator he is constituted of *Manas*, *Prāṇa* and *Vāk* and these three are the basic categories of manifestation spoken of together as *Viśvarūpa*, mythically conceived of as Triśiras, the three-headed son of Tvashṭā. The distinction between *Hṛidaya* and *Manas* is only relative, the former referring to the unmanifest and the latter to the manifest centre of creation.

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# Lecture VI

## AŚVATTHA-VIDYĀ

[ अश्वत्थ-विद्या ]

In the Vedic tradition, creation is conceived of as a Tree (*Vṛiksha*, *Vanaspati*). This Cosmic Tree is called Aśvattha. In Nordic mythology of the Scandinavian countries, there is the conception of the Tree of Existence named Yggdrasil, the Ash Tree having its roots and branches spreading from the earth to the sky and being nourished by the sap of all the worldly powers spread over the past, present and future. All the Gods are seated on its branches. This is the tree of eternal life as existing on the universal plane and also in each individual centre. In the Indian religious tradition this tree is elaborately described with respect to its roots, leaves, branches, stem, fruits, sap, source and existence in time and space. The three worlds, the three divisions of time, the three Gods are all comprehended by the cosmic Aśvattha.

Why is this tree named Aśvattha ? In the Ṛigveda, it is called *Vanaspati*, the Lord of the Forest ; its stately existence and the erect stature between earth and heaven justify this majestic description. It is called the Tree with a thousand branches, *Sahasra-valśa Vanaspati* RV. VII. 33.9; VS. 5.43). Each universe is like a branch of this Tree, being kept green with foliage by the sap

that runs through the body of the Tree. The Branch, the Tree and the Forest, all represent an integrated pattern, i. e. the tree forms an assemblage in the forest and the forest is an aggregate of trees. The Universal is conceived of as the Forest and each world as a tree stands therein. Both are aspects of Brahman. In the Ṛigveda we have the following Brahmodya mantra asking about the Forest and the Tree from which Heaven and Earth were fashioned:—

किंस्विद्वनं क उ स वृक्ष आस यतो द्यावापृथिवी निष्टतक्षुः।
मनीषिणो मनसा पृच्छतेदु तद् यदध्यतिष्ठद् भुवनानि धारयन् ॥
(ऋ० १०।८१।४)

The answers to the questions posed here are available in a mantra preserved in the Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa in which Brahman is said to be the Forest and the Tree functioning both as the efficient and material cause of creation, as well as its support :—

ब्रह्म तद्वनं ब्रह्म उ स वृक्ष आस यतो द्यावापृथिवी निष्टतक्षुः।
मनीषिणो मनसा प्र ब्रवीमि तद् ब्रह्माध्यतिष्ठद् भुवनानि धारयन् ॥
2. 8. 9. 6.

The cosmic Tree is loaded with green foliage (*supalāśa*) and each leaf is said to represent the Vedas, i. e. the wisdom or thought of the Creator which is manifest completely at every living point of the tree. Each leaf or the smallest blade of green grass is a picture of Prajāpati ; as he is so is this. The constituents of Prāṇa or the Life-principle are three-fold

both in the cosmos and in each organism. As a matter of fact, in the words of modern science, an individual cell is the tiniest constituent of life and whatever exists in the universe as the mystery which creates life is also present with all its heavenly and earthly powers in the centre of the cell. Thus in the Kena Upanishad the smallest sample of Prāṇa is called a *Triṇa*, a blade of grass of which the mystery is not comprehended by the Devas, Agni and Vāyu, and in the presence of which Indra also disappears. The mystery appears as a Yaksha, which literally is the symbol of the Mysterious Tree. Its secret is revealed only to Haimavatī Umā, the Great Goddess, who is the Mother and who gives birth to the Life-principle that is Prāṇa.

In the first mantra of the Yajurveda, there is a reference to the branch of a tree which is accepted for *Ish* (Food) and *Ūrj* (Energy); this branch is the human body itself, which is given to each creature for food and for energy. This is the chemistry of the body which receives food and converts it into energy by an organic process which is most complicated and which is distinctive of the organism alone. The branch can never be separated from its stem and the two draw their sap in common from the root of the tree of which they form part.

This tree is described in the Kaṭha Upaniṣad and the Gītā as an Inverted Tree having its root

upwards and its branches coming down (*Ūrdhvamūlam adhaḥ-śākham aśvatthaṁ prāhur avyayam*). Here *Ūrdva* and *Adhaḥ* are not spatial conceptions, but *Ūrdva* signifies the unmanifest immortal source and *Adhaḥ* the material manifestation. These are the two relative stages applicable to the cosmos, viz. its existence in the cause and in effect. *Ūrdva* is the same as the unborn source called *Avyaya*, the imperishable one. The Aśvattha tree is said to be the abode of all the Gods, each leaf is a Divine Seat. The implication is that the cosmos is a divine manifestation and all the powers, whether of mind or life or matter are present in each part of the Tree. This is the strange phenomenon but of eternal verity. There is a thread of unity permeating all time and space and the great distances which separate us from other regions in space do not cut across the uniformity of laws that we know of as the cosmic order (*Ṛita*).

**Why the Name Aśvattha?**—Why is the tree named Aśvattha? There are several points of view. Firstly, it is so called because the phenomenal world is transitory, i.e. changing from day to day. Secondly, it is called *Aśvattha* because it supports itself like a horse on three legs (*Tripād*) whereas the fourth leg is held loose. Here *Tripād* is the symbol of immortal Brahman who is beyond (*Tripād ūrdhvam udait purushaḥ*, RV. X.90.4) and *Ekpād* is here in the form of the visible world (*Pādo asyehābhavat punaḥ*). A

third etymology is even more significant, viz. the tree under which an *Aśva* or horse stands, or which is itself supported by a horse. The horse here is Sūrya, the principle of time which is the main dynamic factor that brings the universe into existence and which as *Saṁvatsra* is the support of all creation. Prajāpati himself becomes the *Saṁvatsra* or time, and on this rotating wheel all creatures have their support. In fact, the great horse, yoked to the cosmic chariot and responsible for its movement, is *Kāla* or Time (*Kālo aśvo vahati saptaraśmiḥ*, AV. 19. 53. 1). What is the visible sign of *Kāla* or *Saṁvatsara*? The answer is that Sūrya is the Horse of Time, which is carrying forward all who sit on the cosmic wheel. Its rotation is the most amazing fact of which the power and magnitude are present in all space and in every organism. Each throbbing heart or pulsating cell derives its rhythmic movement from the Sun, which is the source of *Āyu*, i.e. the period for which *Prāṇa* has come to stay in the body. We are always in the hands of the smaller and greater units of time which make up our lives. By the force of time we are being led forward slowly and steadily both to immortality, i. e. *Āyushya* (*Āyur vai amṛitam*) and also death or the end of life.

CREATION AS AŚVAMEDHA—The creation is conceived of as a Horse Sacrifice, *Aśvamedha*, viz. the dismemberment of the various limbs of the horse.

That is exactly what nature is doing and what is being repeated in every life. Although the time horse is one, but within human experience it must be partitioned into so many units as the years, seasons, nights and days, and even smaller durations. But this parcelling of the horse's body is only superficial because it can never really be cut into separate pieces. The time that has gone before and the time that is to come are indivisible where no line of partition can be detected or shall ever exist. It is only in our phenomenal experience of relative time that we form an idea of its various parts. Such is the law of life and of the cosmos that the one horse, which is absolute must enter into our relative experience and this is symbolised as an *Aśvamedha*. No one can do without sacrificing this horse. Its cutting and hatching and mangling are indispensable for obtaining the pile of time that is life, but as the Ṛigveda says, the horse in the sacrifice can never be cut nor does it die (न म्रियसे न रिष्यसि, I. 162.21) So is time, both indivisible and subject to endless fragmentation.

**Horse is movement**—The symbolism of the horse is patent as being identical with movement (*Gati*). *Aśva* also is so called because it moves (from the root *Aś* to move). The world is a Becoming i.e. an unfoldment by the dynamism of time. The epithet *Aśvattha* derives its justification from the fact of the cosmic tree being the product of Time. According to the

ancient Vedic doctrine of *Aho-rātra*, the Creator himself is identified with *Kāla*. Prajāpati is the horse and the cosmos is created by him as a sacrifice in which he offered himself as an oblation. It is metaphorically spoken of as the dismemberment and reunification of the limbs of the cosmic Purusha. The same pattern applies to the horse in the *Aśvamedha*. The tree is Divine and so is the horse spoken of as born of the Gods (*Deva-jāta*, or *Deva-bandhu*, RV. I. 162.1). The Divine Horse is Sūrya the source of both time and the dynamic energy that is inherent in creation. This is the true nature of the *Aśvattha*. In the minutest atom and the most distant constellations, their distinguishing feature is Motion, incessant, continual movement directed from a source which is inexhaustible. Whence and Whither are two questions without answer, although there is perfect regulation in all these movements.

**Symbolism of the Fuel**—We have pointed out above that the tree forms part of a great forest. The tree is a unit and the forest is the sum total of such units. From this point of view each universe is a tree and all creation comprehending millions and billions of universes is like the forest. The absolute Brahman is that forest (*Brahma tadvanam*). Both the forest, the tree and its thousand branches are like the fuel of the cosmic fire or energy. The fire-stick touched by a spark releases the fire concealed within it. This is the law. How many

fires and how many sticks, this question has been asked and answered in the Ṛigveda. The answer to it is that there are three fires and three sticks (*gāyatrasya samidaḥ tisra āhuḥ*, RV. I.164.25). The three fires are kindled by the three fuel-sticks and in a way both are identical. This principle of Trinity is the same as we have been speaking of, viz. Mind, Life and Matter. These three fires are burning both in the cosmos and each organism. So it is valid to speak of both of them as the tree, a symbolism which is acceptable throughout Vedic thought. The *Yūpa* or the Stake in the Yajña is the symbol of the tree to which each Purusha is tied as an animal in order to be immolated by the hatchet of time and to be sacrificed as an oblation to Gods. This sublimation of the Animal is the essential purpose of the Yajña. On the top of each tree is seated the god of death (*Tasmin vṛikshe supalāśe devaiḥ sampibate yamaḥ*, RV. X. 135.1). Yama is also the god of life. He controls both life and death and life continues during his pleasure. He is the arch-immolator of all (मृत्युः शमिता, तांड्य २५।१८।४). He must be appeased by every Nachiketas or organism, the representative of the Nāchiketa fire, i. e. the mysterious life-principle active in each organic centre. Sometimes we speak of this fire as one and sometimes as three and both points of view are right. Life, Mind and Matter are three entities but at the same time they function as an integrated unit. The three

co-exist, but we also become conscious of their individual existence and functioning. These cities have been pierced by a single shaft from the bow of the great hunter Rudra.

COW AND THE TREE—It is also mentioned in the Ṛigveda that there is a cow fastened to the stem of each tree on which birds are perching. The cow lows and the birds resume their flight (*Vṛikshe vṛikshe niyatā-mīmayad gauḥ tato vayaḥ prapatān pūrushādaḥ*, RV. X. 27.22). The imagery is clear. The tree is the cosmic tree or each individual life. The cow represents the principle of Soma or sustenance or motherhood which creates both the cosmic units and the individual beings. The birds are the three *Prāṇic* energies of Mind, Life and Matter (*Tri-Suparṇa*), which go into action as soon as creation is measured out. The lowing of the cow symbolises both the principle of *Vāk* or material manifestation and its measuring out (from the root *mā* to measure and to low). *Vāk*, as already pointed out, represents the five gross elements, i. e. Matter and its measuring out implies creation or manifestation, spoken of as the striding of the cow. The cow is the omniform Mother (*Viśvarūpā*) and she walks three *Yojanas* thereby revealing all her forms to her calf, viz. Sūrya (*amīmed vatso anu gām apaśyad viśvarūpyaṁ trishu yojaneshu*, RV. I. 164.9). Sūrya is the symbol of *Trayī-Vidyā* and is the source of the three forms, *Manas*, *Prāṇa* and *Vāk*. The birds

awakened into activity by the sound of the mother cow are the *Trayaḥ Suparṇāḥ*, viz. Gāyatrī, Trishṭup, and Jagatī, which stand out as the symbols of Ṛik, Yajus and Sāma, or *Manas*, *Prāṇa*, *Vāk*—ऋचं वाचं प्र पद्ये मनो यजुः प्र पद्ये साम प्राणं प्र पद्ये, VS. 36. 1.

The idea of the Aśvattha forms one of the main planks of Vedic symbolism. The whole cosmos stands erect like a tree raising its head towards the immortal heaven (*Vṛiksha iva stabdhaḥ divi tishṭhatyagre*). In the Āprī hymns one of the deities invariably mentioned is *Vanaspati*, always referring to the tree or the *Yūpa* the *Axis Mundi*, or Pillar which supports the cosmos. Both time in its three divisions and space in the form of the three worlds depend for their existence on the Tree symbolised as Sūrya.

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# Lecture VII

## DAIVĀSURAM

## [ दैवासुरम् ]

DAIVĀSURAM MOTIF—The whole pattern of Vedic cosmogonic symbolism is conceived of as a conflict between the Devas and the Asuras. This conflict is called Daivāsuram in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa. The historical interpretation of the Ṛigveda is based on the identification of Deva with the Aryans and of Asuras with the non-Aryans. This euhemeristic approach of referring myths to historical basis may have its value or even factual basis, but hardly touches the fringe of the problem because not only does it not take into account the whole evidence but we find positive statements in contradiction of the historical nature of the Devāsura descriptions, cf. ŚB. 11.1.6.10—

तस्मादेतदृषिणाभ्यनूक्तम् ।
न त्वं युयुत्से कतमच्चनाहर्न तेऽमित्रो मघवन् कश्चनास्ति ।
मायेत्सा ते यानि युद्धान्याहुर्नाद्य शत्रुं न नु पुरा युयुत्सः ॥

Therefore it is with reference to this that the Ṛishi has said, 'Not for a single day hast thou fought, nor hast thou any enemy, O Maghavan: illusion is what they say concerning thy battles; no foe hast thou fought either to-day or aforetime.'

BATTLE MOTIF IS MĀYĀ—Introducing a mantra the Brāhmaṇa writer emphatically says the account regarding the fight between the Gods and the Asuras which is related in the Itihāsa and in the legends is not true ; for evil represents the Asura and because of this evil in them that they were overcome by the Gods. When Prajāpati created the Gods there was daylight and when he created the Asuras there was darkness. The Devas and the Asuras are the symbols of Day and Night, and *vice-versa* (ŚB., 11.1.6.9-11).

ṚIGVEDIC EVIDENCE—This statement of the Śatapatha is not alone ; it was preceded by a number of staments made in the Ṛigveda itself :—

O Indra, you were born without an enemy (*Aśatrur-indra jajñishe*, X.133.2).

My father created me with no one as my enemy (*Aśatruṁ hi mā janitā jajāna*, X. 28. 6.)

When Indra slew the foremost of the Dragons (Vṛitra) and rent asunder the *Māyā* of those who practise it (*Māyināṁ*), filled the space between heaven and earth by creating the Sun and Dawn—but infact there was at that time no enemy against Indra (*Tādītnā śatruṁ na kilā vivitse*, I. 32. 4).

O Indra, thou art eternally from your birth without an enemy (*Aśatrur Indra janushā sanādasi*, I,102.8). When thou was roaming, waxen strong in body, telling thy might, Indra, among the people,

All that men called thy battles was illusion : no foe hast thou today, nor erst hast found one (RV. X.54.2) :—

यदचरस्तन्वा वावृधानो बलानीन्द्र प्र ब्रुवाणो जनेषु।
मायेत्सा ते यानि युद्धान्याहुर्नाद्य शत्रुं ननु पुरा विवित्से ॥

**Indra-Vṛitra conflict**—The accounts relating to the fight between Deva and Aśura is legendary or mythical. The symbolism of the conflict between the powers of light and darkness, of truth and untruth, of immortality and death, of good and evil has been the supreme motif throughout the religion and philosophy in India. The Vedas, Brāhmaṇas, Purāṇas and and Kāvyas admit this motif as the basis of their thought and have elaborated it in the form of many legends. The fight between Indra and Vṛitra is the primary pattern leading to many other similar formulations, such as Rudra and Tripura, Skanda and Tāraka, Rāma and Rāvaṇa, Gaṇapati and Vighna, Devī and Mahisha, Vishṇu and Madhu-Kaiṭabha, etc.. It would be difficult to postulate a historical basis for such tales of an avowedly mythical chatacter. It should be recognised that mythology and history have different approaches, the former revelling in supernatural features and the latter in normal human behaviour. Mythology is a recurrent phenomenon whereas history is fixed in time as an unalterable fact. The one is purposeful formulation to explain a metaphysical or religious idea, the other is the unfoldment of the mundane aspect in the lives of men. The

distinction between the two is patent; there is no doubt after all that there is a divine purpose being revealed in the lives of men on the stage of the world. Ultimately fact and legend both seem to shake hands where the ontological meaning of the life of man and of the cosmic process begins to be considered.

MAN—Man is an integral part of the cosmos, and the supreme law that governs the birth and the death of the Sun, Moon, Ocean, Winds, Plants and Animals is verily the same as manifesting in the lives of men. Man is at the centre of the universe, we are living in a homocentric world. Man is the supreme consideration. As Vedavyāsa has said; I reveal unto you this hidden truth that there is nothing higher than man :—

गुह्यं ब्रह्म तदिदं ब्रवीमि नहि मानुषाच्छ्रेष्ठतरं हि किञ्चित् ।

According to the Vedas all the divine and earthly powers have a meaning with reference to Man. Man is Vaiśvānara, the composite principle of the Three Persons, namely, Mind, Life, and Matter. The Ṛigveda speaks of Vaiśvānara as the king of the worlds (*Rājā hi kaṁ bhuvanānām abhiśrīḥ*, RV. 1.98.1). The Life-principle within the body is defined as Agni Vaiśvānara, the Baphometic Fire, which is the same as Purusha (*Sa esho agnir vaiśvānaraḥ yo'yamantaḥ-purushe*, ŚB., 14.8.10.1).

The Gītā clearly defines that Vaiśvānara is life within the body of men and is the same as the Divine

Essence incarnating and functioning on the plane of matter (*Ahaṁ vaiśvānaro bhūtvā prāṇināṁ deham-aśthitaḥ, Prāṇāpāna-samāyuktaḥ pachāmy-annaṁ chatur-vidham*, Gītā, 15.14). For the Ṛishis the Vaiśvānara fire is the Prāṇa Purusha, which in modern terms we speak of as Person. The symbolical enunciation was directed to explain the constitution and the working of the mind, life and gross material elements.

The problem of life is conceived of in the pattern of a conflict raging since the beginning of time and in all places, as the fight between the forces of light and darkness. The former represent the Devas and the latter the Asuras, both are said to be sons of Prajāpati. He who made the cosmos created this basic duality that functions sometimes in accord and sometimes in discord. The former pattern of friendship is conceived of as the dual deities Mitra and Varuṇa, where Mitra stands for Sūrya and Light, and Varuṇa for the Asuras and Darkness. The hostility between the two basic powers is the arch conflict between Indra and Vṛitra, former as the king of the Gods and the latter as the king of the Demons. It is a war between the giants and the dragons, fight between Angles and Titans, between the celestial powers of heaven and the chthonic powers of the dark recesses of the earth.

Whatever is signified by the Devas and by the Asuras has reference to the life of man and the world. We see it in a visible form as Day and Night, the

former as Deva and the latter as Asura. The daily rotation of night and day comes much later in the process of creation; originally the two principles take their birth in the mind of the Creator. The Ṛishis speak a language of symbolism, reaching far and wide. The word is only a pointer, but its meaning is the real thing. The word appears and fades away, but the meaning exists for ever. The word is mortal speech (*Martyā Vāk*) but the meaning is immortal (*Amṛitā Vāk*).

Deva and Yajña—Wherever there is the presence of Deva, there must be a Yajña. In the word Yajña the whole creative process is included. When Yajña is said, everything is said about the cosmos and man. Each of them is a Yajña. The Deva in the cosmos is called *Adhidaiva* and the individual centre as *Adhyātma*. Both are closely related and are like the two sides of the same medal. The most important thing in the Yajña is the altar (*Vedi*), which is the mother and Agni that is kindled in the altar is the Deva or divine principle that becomes manifest in the sacrifice. The Mother principle creates, but the life that enters in the womb is the Father principle or Deva. The entire Vedic imagery depends on the conception of the Deva.

Number of Devas—A difficulty arises as to the number of Devas. Originally the Deva is said to be one, i. e. the one Reality which is the primary source of all

things. That one Deva becomes three, the three become seven. From another point of view the Devas are said to be 3,33,303 and 3003. There is a hidden meaning and connection between these figures. The Three Devas are Agni, Vāyu, Āditya which are only superficially fire, air and sun ; in reality they are the three kinds of Prānic energies from which Mind, Life, and Matter are respectively evolved. These three again become triply multiplied by 10,100, and 1,000, and with each of them the original Three remain as the basis. Thus the number of Devas which is basically one becomes three, then successively thirty-three ($33 = 3 \times 10 + 3$), three hundred and three ($303 = 3 \times 100 + 3$), and three thousand and three ($3003 = 3 \times 1000 + 3$), the total being 3339 (RV III. 9.9 ; VS. 33.7. In the Vaiśvadeva Nivid or the Formula of Invitation to the All-Gods the number is given as 3 times 11, then 33, then 303, then 3003, i. e. 3339. Both are valid, the number thrice-eleven is stated with reference to the thirty-three (33) Prāṇic deities in which the three groups are equally balanced of which eleven (11) is the unit.

The number 3339 is symbolical of the deities when viewed at from the level of the Mind, in which their three-fold distinction is expressed in terms of 10, 100 and 1000 multiplied by the basic number 3.

There is still another computation by which the Devas are said to be 33, including the 8 Vasus, 11

Rudras and 12 Ādityas with the 2 Aśvins in between them as holding fast the moving wheel of these triple powers. All these statements are acceptable as something like varied geometries offering the foundational plan of the cosmos on the three levels of Mind, Life and Matter.

The idea of the 8 Vasus also should be clearly understood. They belong to the material plane of manifestation in which all the three principles of Mind, Life and Matter coexist. Their very name is significant. Why are they called Vasus ? The answer is that they are essential for creating manifest form (*Ete vasavaḥ ete hīdam sarvaṁ vāsayanti te yadidaṁ sarvaṁ vāsayante tasmād vasavaḥ*, ŚB. 11, 6. 3. 6.). Mind, Prāṇa and Apāna signifying polarised vitality, and five material elements make up the eight Vasus. This is the first basic level which is known as the lower Matter (*Aparā Prakṛiti*, Gītā, 7. 4-5), which in fact is *Vikṛiti* or the modified form of Matter for creating the individual organism. But this first constituent although basic and essential is not enough ; it is vivified by the principle of Life called *Jīva*, the individual soul which is symbolised as the triple Vaiśvānara constituted by the three *Prāṇas*, viz. *Prāṇa, Apāna* and *Vyāna*. Matter is spoken of as a heap or pile of the five gross elements and is a *Kūṭa* according to the Gita. On this material foundation subsists the *Akshra Brahman* or *Kūṭastha Jīva* or *Parā Prakṛiti* :-

*Ksharaḥ sarvāṇi bhūtāni kūṭashthokshara uchyate* (Gītā, 15.16). This *Kūṭastha* or *Akshara* principle of the vital Purusha is symbolised as Rudra with eleven constituents, viz. 8 *Vasus* and 3 *Prāṇas* and significantly called *Trishṭup*, that is a mound supporing the Three.

The third constituent of the individual organism is the principle of Mind (*Manas*) which is One and symbolised as Āditya. The number of Ādityas is 12 obtained by adding 8, 3, 1, i.e. the Vasu, Rudra and Āditya. Each one of them is also aggregated separately making 8 + 11 + 12 as the number of Devas which form a single rotating wheel of energised motion.

PRĀṆA AS THE SUPREME DEVA—Each of the three entities would remain disjointed without two Prāṇic Devatās in between them to maintain their coherence. Thus the 31 Devas + the 2 Aśvins make the total of 33 Gods on the plane of material manifestation constituted by Matter, Life and Mind. It is like a *Stūpa* or pyramid in which the threefold Prajāpati becomes incarnated as Purusha. Prajāpati primarily is *Prāṇa*,* each one of these groups of

* One of the clearest statements that the Creater Prajāpati is Prānic energy in the form of these worlds, and that all living creatures are Prajāpati is the following :—

स (प्रजापतिः) इष्ट्वाकामयताहमेवेदं सर्वं स्यामिति स प्राणोऽभवत्प्राणो वा इदं सर्वमयं वै प्राणो योऽयं पवते स प्रजापतिस्तस्य दृष्टिर्यंदेव वेदेत्थाद्वातीति यद्वै किंच प्राणि स प्रजापतिः। स यो हैवमेतां प्रजापतेर्दृष्टिं वेदाविरिव हैव भवति। शतपथ ११।१।६।१२

Devas is also nothing else than *Prāṇa* as clearly stated in the Brāhmṇas—*Prāṇā vai Vasavaḥ, Prāṇā vai Rudrāḥ, Prāṇā vai Ādityāḥ,* JUB. 4. 2. 3., 6, 9. There is no question that ultimately the whole cosmic substratum consists of one basic energy which is the source of both the inanimate matter and living consciousness and both of them are emanations of one Supreme Reality called Brahman who is revealing his power and nature by transforming Himself as the Universal Super-Mind (*Manas*) or the principle of Intellection (*Vijñāna*). He is symbolised as Sūrya or Āditya, the Supernal Sun whose visual form is the Solar Orb in heaven as pointed out in the Yajur-Veda (*Brahma Sūryasamaṁ jyotiḥ* (23. 48). Sūrya is the archetypical Deva from whom all the other gods in heaven and on earth, i. e. all the powers of Mind and Matter have their being. This yonder Sūrya is essentially material but brought into existence by the supreme power of Brahman or universal consciousness. This Sūrya seemingly so vast is but a tiny particle in comparison to the multi-million other suns which fill the immeasurable space and are held together by a single Axis (*Skambha*), or woven together by one unifying Thread (*Sūtratmā*) that dominates, controls, regulates, and pushes into dynamic action all that is or will be. He is also called the great *Antaryāmin* Purusha who excites a feeling of awe and wonder and by whose dread the

mighty gods like Agni, Sūrya, Indra, Vāyu and Mṛityu are burning, blazing, rushing and killing. Each god is a Hero and often described as such in the Ṛigveda with the requisite paraphernalia. But the greatest of them is Indra who is the same as Brahman, in whose victory the divine host triumphs over the powers of the gnomes, the diminutive subterrarean spirits of darkness known as the Asuras. The Daivāsuram conflict is a pattern embellished with rich cosmic meaning as the basis of Vedic metaphysical thought.

# Lecture VIII

## PRAJĀPATI
## [ प्रजापति ]

PRAJĀPATI AND HIS PRAJĀ—The Vedic conception of Prajāpati is basic to understand the cosmogonic formulations of the Ṛishis. Prajāpati literally is the lord of all beings where *Prajā* represents the creation and Prajāpati the Creator. Prajāpati is Deva, the highest Divinity who is both transcendent and immanent in his creation. Creation is the completest manifestation of the Creator. The cosmos is composed of twofold phenomena, viz. *Deva* and *Bhūta*, the former being the immortal and the latter the mortal principle of Matter. Prajāpati represents both of them. It is therefore mentioned in the Brāhmaṇas that Prajāpati is both manifest and unmanifest (*nirukta and anirukta*), both limited and unlimited (*parimita and aparimita*), and both formed and formless (*mūrta and amūrta*). This is an important statement which governs the thought of the Ṛigveda.

AJA OR AJĀYAMĀNA—It is sometimes pointed out that the conception of Prajāpati was a later development or a subsequent grafting on the original metaphysical thought of the Ṛishis. This may be true so far as the use of the word Prajāpati is con-

cerned although in the tenth maṇḍala of the Ṛigveda we find a full-fledged development of the conception of Prajāpati (RV. X. 81-86, 121), but the basic idea about the transcendent creative principle did exist from the beginning. For example, Prajāpati is said to be unborn and abiding in the womb, and at the same time the latent principle assuming all the various forms of manifestation :—

प्रजापतिश्चरति गर्भे अन्तरजायमानो वहुधा विजायते ।

Here what is called *ajāyamāna* is the same as Aja, the Unborn, very often referred to in the Ṛigveda (I. 164.1). This epithet is repeated in the Sūkta of Viśvakarmā Prajāpati (X. 82.6). The unborn principle is spoken of as the Navel (*Nābhi*), which is the immortal undifferentiated centre and source of all creation :—

अजस्य नाभावध्येकमर्पितं यस्मिन्विश्वानि भुवनाधि तस्थुः ।

Here the Aja is no doubt unborn Creator who is spoken of as the support and substratum of all the wrolds and is in itself a mysterious principle which gives birth to the six directions of space or from whom the six Lokas take their birth :—

वि यस्तस्तंभ षडिमारजांसि अजस्य रूपे किमपिस्विदेकम् ।
(RV. I. 164.6)

CREATION OF PRAJĀPATI—The cosmos is said to be the work of Prajāpati who is thereby known as Viśvakarmā. Prajāpati is conceived of as archetypal,

namely the model for the worlds that he creates. He is the sacrificer who makes a total offering of himself in the cosmic sacrifice. Creation is rightly spoken of as a *Sarvahut* Yajña in which the Creator offered his whole substance in the triple form of Mind, Life and Matter. Creation is primarily an idea or the thought of the Creator, and secondarily it becomes manifested on the plane of matter in various forms. The ideational level is spoken of as Deva and the material level as *Paśu*, *Prajā* or *Bhūta*.

THREE EPITHETS—Prajāpati is termed as *Ṛishi*, *Hotā* and *Pitā* (RV. X. 81.1). These three epithets refer respectively to the three principles of *Manas* (*Mind*), *Prāṇa* (Life), and *Bhūtas* (Matter). These three entities pre-exist in the source from where they manifested in creation. This is the basic truth of the essence of Prajāpati and of his total identity with the created world.

FROM SUBTLE TO GROSS—One thing should be remembred, namely that the Creator starts a chain action of the subtle principle to become gross in successive stages of manifestation, and as the supreme essence himself becomes incarnate at every level and in all forms whatsoever. He enters what he creates :—

प्रथमच्छद् अवराँ आविवेश (RV. X. 81.1)

Here it is said that the Creator is the highest or transcendent principle and the whole cosmos is lower

or subsequent to him. That which is primeval presides over all the subsequent majesties or greatnesses (*Mahimānaḥ*) which inhere in the centre and are released by it as forces for external emanation.

CENTRE OR KA PRAJĀPATI :—Prajāpati as the centre symbolises the principle of Rest. All motion proceeds from a source that is at rest. This aspect of Prajāpati is an unknown quantity symbolically referred to as *Ka*, which is invoked in the Ṛigveda under the formula *Kasmai devāya havishā vidhema* (RV. X. 121.1). *Ka* corresponds to the algebrical expression $x$, a question to which the Ṛigveda refers as Saṁpraśna :—

यो देवानां नामधा एक एव तं संप्रश्नं भुवना यन्त्यन्या (RV. X. 82.3).

OTHER NAMES—This unknown and unmanifest Prajāpati is called by many names, e.g. Hiraṇyagarbha, Eka, Tūshṇīm, Paroksha Ūrdhva, Nabhya, Sthāṇu, Guhā, Uktha, Agra, Amṛita, Tat, Hṛidaya, Kendra Yoni, Garbha, Avyakta etc.. The idea always is that there is an unmanifest transcedent source which is immortal and eternal from which the universe takes its birth. The former is known as Purusha Prajāpati and the latter as Mahimā Prajāpati. The cosmic greatness of the Creator is unlimited, but Purusha himself is even greater being unconditioned in Time and Space—एतावानस्य महिमातो ज्यायाँश्च पूरुषः (RV. X. 90.3).

RELATIVE ASPECT OF PRAJĀPATI—Having thus stated the nature of the Absolute, the Vedas elaborate

the conception of the relative aspect of the Creator identified with the cosmos itself. It is admitted that the Creator and his creation are typical of an identical principle and the one is a complete mirror of the other. If Prajāpati may be called Brahman and the world as Vāk or the five gross elements of Matter, the Vedic view is that both are coextensive and coeval (*Yāvad brahma vishṭhitaṁ tāvatī Vāk*, RV. X. 114.8). The main point about manifest Prajāpati is that of his triple nature from which the three-fold cosmic manifestation has taken place. This theory of the Triad being at the root of the cosmos is the fundamental creed of Vedic metaphysics, religion and ritual, as very often expressed through a series of triadic formulas, e. g.

1. Sound Form (स्वनवती तनूः) as A-U-M.
2. Sex Form (लिङ्गवती तनूः) as Female, Male & Neuter.
3. Light Form (भास्वती तनूः) as Agni, Vāyu, Āditya, the Three Lights.
4. Trideva Form (अधिपतिवती तनूः) as Brahmā, Rudra, Vishṇu.
5. Three-mouthed Form (मुखवती तनूः) as Gārhapatya, Dakshiṇāgni, Āhavanīya, being the Three Fires in the sacrifice.
6. Knowledge Form (विज्ञानवती तनूः) as Ṛik, Yajus and Sāma.

7. World Form (लोकवती तनूः) as Bhūḥ, Bhuvaḥ, Svaḥ or the earth, atmosphere and heaven.
8. Time Form (कालवती तनूः) as Past, Present and Future.
9. Power Form (प्रतापवती तनूः) as Mind (Sūrya), Life (Prāṇa), Matter (Agni).
10. Nutrient Form (आप्यायनवती तनूः) as Food (*Anna*), Water (*Āpaḥ*), Soma (*Chandramāḥ*).
11. Consciousness Form (चेतनवती तनूः) as Buddhi, Manas, Ahaṅkāra.
12. Life Form (प्राणवती तनूः) as Prāṇa, Apāna and Vyāna. (Maitrāyaṇī Upanishad, 6).

All the above aspects are symbolised by the syllable A-U-M, which denotes both the transcendent and the relative aspects of the Creator (*Paraṁ cha Aparaṁ cha*).

The trinitarian constitution of the cosmos is a reality of which the roots lie in the unmanifest source, that is Prajāpati himself in his absolute transcendent and unconditioned form. The thirty-three gods namely, Vasus, Rudras and Ādityas and the two Aśvins are emanations of unmanifest Prajāpati who is therefore also termed as the thirty-fourth Principle (*Chatustriṁśa Prajāpati*). He is also given the name of Shoḍaśī Prajāpati, that is the Sixteen-fold Creator. The genesis of the name lies in the fact

that the five sheaths of the Mind, the five-fold Prāṇas and the five gross elements of Matter forming a composite group of fifteen with reference to the psychic, vital and physical man, with the immortal substratum as the sixteenth. In whatever manner we may choose to describe and designate Reality which is Supreme over all the manifest forms, the truth remains that he is Prajāpati in his two-fold aspects who is manifest in the cosmos (*Viśvachara rūpa*) and who is also beyond (*Viśvātīta rūpa*).

TŪSHṆĪM—ITS TRUE MEANING—A significant designation of Prajāpati in the Brāhmaṇas is *Tūshṇīm*, that is Silence as opposed to *Vāk* or Speech. *Vāk* is the symbol of the material world and the immortal reality underlying all matter is that aspect of Vāk which is referred to in the Ṛigveda as Thousand-syllabled existing in the highest heaven (*Sahasrāksharā prame vyoman*, RV. I. 164. 41). Silence is as deep as eternity; speech is as shallow as time. The latter is subject to measurement and computations, whereas the former defies all description and relative conception.

PRAJĀPATI IDENTIFIED AS YAJÑA—In his triadic aspect it is valid to identify Prajāpati with Yajña both on the cosmic level and in the individual centre. Yajña, Saṁvatsara and Cosmos are three veritable forms of Prajāpati. Prajāpati has completely expressed himself in the Yajña. All the gods, metres,

pressings, powers, worlds, that are comprised in the Yajña represent the triadic forms of Prajāpati.

PURUSHA—On this basis the individual Purusha is the completest manifestation of Prajāpati, that is a dynamic and vital centre in which all the powers between earth and heaven have incarnated as the single principle called Life or *Prāṇa*, or which is the same as Agni, for Agni is defined as Prāṇa that inheres in every living being (प्राणो वै नृषन्मनुष्या नरस्तद्योऽयं मनुष्येषु प्राणोऽग्निस्तमेतदाह, शतपथ ६।७।३।११; प्राणो वै नृषद्, श० ६।२।१।८, यजु० १७।१२). It may well be said that there is nothing higher than Man in creation. Man is the supreme consideration. Man is nearest to Prajāpati (*Purusho vāva prajāpater nedishṭham*, ŚB. 4.3.4.3), or man is Prajāpati himself (*Purushaḥ Prajāpatiḥ*, ŚB. 6.2.1.23). Prajāpati is the Pillar or *Axis Mundi*, the fulcrum, support or centre, the immortal navel and the rhythmic pulsating principle, whose dynamic emergence in the form of Cosmos on the one hand and of Man on the other is the supreme fact of our experience. Life within the person is as great a mystery as Prajāpati himself. This fact of Man or Purusha being at the centre of all creation or ritual or of knowledge holds the key to the metaphysical lore of the Ṛishis. The Brahāmaṇa writers are never tired of repeating it. As a matter of fact the whole ceremony of the building of the fire-altar (*Agni-chayana* and *Mahāvedi*) is directed to explain the progeniton of the individual life-centre

which serves as the abode of Purusha, Agni, Prāṇa or Prajāpati.

SAMVATSARA AS PRAJĀPATI—Saṁvatsara or Time also stands as the complete symbol of Prajāpati. The Year is the potent revolving wheel, the divine machine which bears on its frame the universe on the one hand and the individual life-centre on the other. It is said that when Prajāpati meditated on the plan of cosmic creation he perfected the conception of Saṁvatsara or the Year. Nothing more remained to be done since Time as the rotating wheel has the complete potency of making manifest the cosmos in all its vast durations on the one hand and Man on the other with all the mysteries of life unfolding in him.

The mystery of time as the dominant force of manifestation is beyond comprehension. Time is both absolute and relative, the latter appearing as the Dawn in the morning sky from day to day. The absolute Time fecundates the goddess of Dawn and it results in a never ceasing generation or becoming of the worlds. At every point the divine Saṁvatsara is depositing its germ in the womb of the goddess Ushā and giving birth to the Babe or *Kumāra* identified as the Life-principle both in man and the cosmos.

PRAJĀPATĪ AS KĀLA—Each one of these units of time is a complete symbol of the dual nature of Prajāpati. There is no moment of the day which does not

contain an element of darkness and the same is true of the moments of the night. Light is Mitra and Darkness is Varuṇa ; the two deities are eternal friends and the one cannot exist without the other. Mitra as Sūrya or Indra is the deity of Devas and Varuṇa of the Asuras. Both the Devas and Asuras are spoken of as the progeny of Prajāpati, viz. their forms differ but both belong to a common source. In the same womb of the mother both the son and the daughter are nurtured, their differentiation is a mystery. This distinction on the plane of Matter is not casual or haphazard but is part of a basic plan essential for Life.

The best description of Prajāpati is to liken him to a *Chakra* or Wheel. Night and Day, the two-halves of the month and the two halves of the year are all different forms of this moving wheel. As a matter of fact the sacrifices are modelled to correspond with the Time units. Darśa and Paurṇamāsa, viz. the sacrifice of the Dark half and that of the Bright half of the month are the dominant symbols of this rotation (*Kāla-chakra-parivartana*, RV. I. 164. 13). These two are said to be Prakṛiti Yajñas, the exemplars of all other sacrifices. The month is verily the visible form of Prajāpati.

A wide range of interpretations for Prajāpati is proposed in the Brāhmaṇa literature. Although divergent, they are admissible from the esoteric point of view which is both panthiestic and monothiestic as is

so often the case with other Vedic deities. For example, Prajāpati is Saṁvatsara (KB. 6,15). Prajāpati in his manifest form is Yajña (ŚB. 4.3.4.3., ŚB. 1. 7. 4.). Prāṇa or Life-principle is Prajāpat (ŚB. 45513, JUB. 2.2.6). Vāyu is the manifest form of Prajāpati, since Prāṇa or Life-principle depends directly on the air we breathe (KB. 19. 2). Hiraṇyagarbha is Prajāpati (ŚB. 10. 1. 4. 9.). Brahmā is Prajāpati (GB. 2.5.8). Prajāpati is Manu because in his mind he thought of these worlds (ŚB. 6.1. 1. 19). Prajāpati created the Prajā and therefore was named as *Viśhvakarmā* implying that *Prajā* and *Viśva* signify the same principle, viz. the created cosmos (AB.4.22). Prajāpati is the winged Eagle called *Garutmā Suparṇa*, identified as Time, Sūrya Prāṇa, etc. (RV.X.149.3., ŚB. 10.2.2.4.).

AŚVAMEDHA SACRIFICE—Prajāpati himself became the horse to be sacrificed in the Aśvamedha (TB. 3. 9. 21. 1.). This leads us to the symbolism of the Aśvamedha sacrifice in which the Horse dismembered limb by limb and yet remaining whole and deathless is Time itself (*Kālo aśvo vahiti sapta-raśmiḥ*, AV. 19. 53. 1). This divine Horse is the symbol of movement and enters into the life of the cosmos as well as of the individual. Superficially it is mangled, hacked, or severed in big and small parts as seasons, months, days, and moments, but in reality this dismemberment is only an illusion and the Time Horse defies the

hatchet of the Immolator or Death. Such is Prajāpati whose seed is emptied in his creation but who is becoming renovated and youthful for ever by the Yajña in which his power is becoming manifest.

MEANING OF THE WORD PRAJĀPATI—It has already been pointed out that Prajāpati is *Upāṁśu* or *Tūshṇīm*, namely Silence or the unmanifest source of all that is becoming manifest (ŚB. 1.6.3.27, Tāṇḍya, 7.1.1.). Prajāpati is the Self (*Ātman*, ŚB. 4.6.1.1.). As the *Ātman* is three-fold so is Prajāpati, viz. constituted of Mind, Life and Matter (*Etanmayo vā ayam ātmā vāṅmayo manomayaḥ prāṇamayaḥ*, ŚB. 14.4.3.10). *Purusha* or the Life principle encased within the bodily sheath is manifested Prajāpati (ŚB. 4.3.4.3., TB. 2.2. 5. 3., ŚB. 6.2.1.23). An important definition is that the biological creative act is the form of Prajāpati (*Prajananaṁ Prajāpatiḥ*, ŚB. 5.1.310). Prajāpati is also identified with the principle of Mind (*Prajāpatirvāhimanaḥ*, KB. 10.1.26.3, ŚB. 4.1.1.22), and also with the principal of Matter called *Vāk* (*Prajāpatir hi Vāk*, TB. 1.3.4.5.). In the form of the five elements of Matter the full glory of Prajāpati becomes manifest. This statement is of the highest importance as a clue to the cosmogonic formulation of the Vedie seers. It is clearly stated that Prajāpati existed in the beginning and that he entered into union with *Vāk*, or the principle of primordial Matter and fecundated her (*Prajāpatir idam āsīt tasya Vāg dvitīyāsīt mithunaṁ samabhavat sā*

*garbham ādhatta*, Tāṇḍya, 20.14.2 ). The explosive power abiding in the minutest particles of Matter is due to the Divine Creator laying his seed in her womb. The union of the two signifies the most complete and total act of creation which is repeated at all times in the union of Man and Woman for reproducing the Babe. According to the true Vedic conception the Father, the Mother and the Son all three are triple forms of Prajāpati :—

*Māteva Piteva cha Prajāpatih* (ŚB. 5.1.5.26).

CREATIVE PROCESS—The infinite power of pro-creativity, fecundation and of the seed germinating in the mother's womb is the supreme fact of creation. It is the central truth of the universal mother or Nature herself that she is becoming incarnate within the life-cell together with all the laws of the vital, physical and psychic sheaths. She is called *Virāj*, the daughter of the supreme divinity called Prajāpati or Indra. Prajāpati is self-existent or Svarāṭ (*Svayambhū*) and Nature is Virāj, the Universal Mother, or the Cow whose milk sustains all creatures and whose calf is the Sun, symbolising the divine centre of each individual and world-system.

DYĀVĀ-PṚITHIVĪ, FATHER-MOTHER—In the Ṛigveda Prajāpati is said to create the twin principles of Dyāvā-Pṛithivī, the universal parents. Dyauḥ or Heaven stands for the father principle and Pṛithivī or the earth for the mother principle. By Dyauḥ one need not look

up to the sky or by Pṛithivī to the earth below our feet, these are but the two symbols of parenthood. Pṛithivī is primordial Matter and Dyauḥ is the Divine Purusha, the immortal Deva. The immortal and the mortal have existed together exercising a mutual pull, affronted in a loving embrace and in deepest romantic repercussions. They are symbolised as the eternal Man and the eternal Woman, the former as *Pati* and the latter as *Patnī*, or as it is sometimes said the youthful Dauhgter Prajāpati woos—*Atrā pitā duhitur garbham* ādhāt (RV.I.164, 33). This has reference to divine ordinances and to no mean incest ; they explain the primeval processes and must be understood in the context of the universal creative laws (*Tāni dharmāṇi prathamāny-āsan*, RV. X 90.16). Prajāpati is the grand Old Man, the ageless Father in whom abides the cosmic germ (*Bhuvanasya retaḥ*, RV. I. 164.35), or the ancient seed (*Pratna retaḥ*). Matter is the daughter called *Duhitā* or *Prajā*, who is vitalised and sired by the husbanding potency of Prajāpatī.

PRAJĀPATI-THE ABSOLUTE PURUSHA–The conception of the one Creator as supreme over all other lords found distinct formulation in the Ṛigvedic mantras. Prajāpati is addressed as *Deva Ekaḥ* creating the earth and the heaven (*Dyāvā-bhūmī janayan*, RV. X. 81. 3). The transcendent Prajāpati is conceived of as having a thousand heads, eyes, arms and feet, very much similar to the conception of Purusha in the

Purusha Sūkta (RV.X.90.1.) The question is raised as to the ultimate substratum of the Cosmos and Prajāpati. Viśvakarmā is stated to be not only the material cause, but also the ultimate source of creation who measures out the earth and the immortal heaven by his principle of envelopment. Prajāpati in his absolute aspect is without any limitation of Time and Space, but for the sake of creation he maps out the worlds by the principle of finitisation. This is referred to as the *Dyāvā-Pṛithivī* unit which is the container of each universe. In the symbolism *Dyāvā-Pṛithivī*, the sky stands for the immortal divine principle and Pṛithivī for Matter. The cosmos is the result of these two coming together. We find also a conception in which Prajāpatī, the Creator, is spoken of as the Forest and the Tree out of which the earth and the heaven were fashioned as from a branch. The answer to the question as to which was that forest and which was the tree, is found in a mantra preserved in the Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa where Brahman is stated to be the Forest and the Tree and the presiding Reality over all the worlds. This implies the identity of Prajāpati with Brahman.

PRAJĀPATI IN THE TORTOISE INCARNATION— The *Dyāvā-Pṛithivī* are like the two cells of a single egg and both together are defined as *Kūrma*, that is the primeval Tortoise which is said to be an incarnation of Prajāpati. One of his names in the Purāṇas

is Kaśyapa, literally one who sips water from the margin. The idea is that the created cosmos springs into existence out of the infinite ocean called *Samudra*, *Salilam*, *Āpaḥ*, *Arṇava*, etc.. This is also known as the universal principle of *Ṛita* or *Soma*, which marginally filters to the enveloped centre in which the principle of Agni becomes manifest as a pulsating force. This centre of Agni is conceived of as a live or burning coal called Aṅgiras and constantly needs to be propitiated with Soma from outside. The inner pulsating centre is also called *Satya* to distinguish it from the universal *Ṛita* encircling it on all sides. This is the picture of Kaśyapa Prajāpati, same as Kachchhapa or Kūrma, that derives its sustenance from the universal source of energy flowing forth to the fiery centre within it. In Purāṇic idealogy this is elaborated as the *Hiraṇyagarbha-vidyā*. *Hiraṇya* or Gold is the principle of Prāṇa or fiery energy which manifests as the life-principle which is contained within the cosmic egg and the individual fertilized ovum. This is how nature has designed to create and perpetuate life through the cell or egg. Hiraṇya-garbha is the name of Prajāpati who presides over the birth of all living creatures :—

हिरण्यगर्भः समवर्तताग्रे भूतस्य जातः पतिरेक आसीत्
(RV. X.121.1)

The definitions are clear and precise, viz. all creation is *Prajā*, each and every thing that takes

birth either in the individual centre or on the cosmic plane is aptly termed *Prajā*, and thereby confers on its creator the title Prajāpati. The entire cosmic science and metaphysics are therefore comprehended in the single epithet *Prajāpati-vidyā*, that is the knowledge of the manifest forms and of their unmanifest source. Both science and metaphysics grapple with the single problem, the former verifies on the plane of Matter the truth or mystery which the latter enunciates on the plane of thought. Both are face to face with an inscrutable mystery which is imprisoned in the material form. There is no real conflict between the two although the approach may be different. Both aim to unravel the mystery which the created form carries within its womb—be it the mystery of Mind or Life or Matter, which are the three constituents of all created forms (*Prajā*), and therefore also exist in the unmanifest source (*Prajāpati*). There is no power on earth or in heaven, that is on the mortal plane of Matter and in the immortal source of the Divine, which is not present in Prajāpati or included in his ordinances (*Praśisham yasya devāḥ*, RV. X. 121. 2).

THE DOCTRINE OF LIGHT AND SHADE—The doctrine of Light and Shade (*Chhāyātapau*) had been formulated with reference to Prajāpati in the Ṛigveda itself. According to the Kaṭha Upanishad the Brahmavādin sages who tended the five fires (*Pañchāgnayaḥ*)

and who knew the three mysterious Fires of Mind, Life and Matter (*Triṇāchiketāḥ*), were well versed in the twin principles of Light which signifies the immortal divine or Deva principle, and shade which stands for the dark principle of Matter. Both have their existence in Prajāpati.

DVIPAD AND CHATUSHPAD—Life energy which is the sign of living beings (*Prāṇa*) as displayed through consciousness is the exclusive prerogative of Prajāpati. He is the soveriegn and his majesty is the Cosmos. He rules supreme over the two-footed and the four-footed, the former referring to the basic duality of *Amṛita* and *Mṛityu*, and the latter to the four states of consciousness, viz. *Jāgrat*, *Svapna*, *Sushupti*, and *Turīya*. There is no individual life which is not at the same time both a biped and a quadruped for that is the basic design of our constitution (य ईशे अस्य द्विपदश्चतुष्पदः, RV. X.121.3.) On the one hand we function as the individual placed in rhythmic relationship with the universal, and on the other as a triune coherence of Mind, Life and Matter being constantly vitalised by a transcendent source and sub-stratum, viz. *Chatushpād Brāhmaṇa* or *Ātman*.

MEASURING OUT FROM THE CENTRE—Although as *Ka* or the centre at rest Prajāpati is the unmanifest and unknowable principle, yet all the dynamism of creation or whatever force or energy is witnessed in

Matter belongs to Prajāpati. Rest and Motion are the two aspects of the same principle. All the centrifugal forces originate from a centre which is at Rest. The dynamics of creation is significantly referred to as *Rajaso vimānaḥ* (RV. X.121.5). The cosmos is a 'measuring out', or an unfoldment of the rhythmic process of expansion and contraction (*Samañchna-prasāraṇa*, ŚB. 8.1.4.10, VS. 27.45, प्रेत्या एत्यै सं चाञ्च प्र च सारय). The energy which makes possible this cosmic rhythm is termed *Rajas*. Literally *Rajas* is a particle of dust. All matter is dust which is splashed into space in an agitated form, called *tīvra reṇu* as if by the dance steps of the cosmic powers (*Atrā vo nṛityatām iva tīvro reṇur ajāyata*, RV. X.71.6). When the Fires of creation began to blaze within the depths of the universal ocean of energy, the God symbolising the primeval building forces sprang upon their feet in an agitated condition (*Susaṁrabdhā atishṭhata*, RV. X.72.6), and their dance movements filled all space with ruffled dust. This is a picture of the *Tāṇḍava* dance which initiates the creative process. This is why Indra is addressed as the Dancer (*Nṛitu*, RV. VIII, 24.12). Indra who performs this dance and Prajāpati who measures out the worlds are both the same as Sūrya whose rhythmic movements are exemplified as Time or the revolving wheel of *Saṁvatsara*. Prajāpati is in a real manner identified with Sūrya.

PRAJÂPATI AS SŪRYA—In the Purāṇas we have a five-fold conception of Prajāpatī viz. Svayambhū Prajāpati, Parameshṭhī Prajāpati Hiraṇyagarbha Prajapati, Brahmā Prajāpati and Kaśyapa Prajāpati. The first Svayambhū refers to the self-existent unmanifest and transcendent source of all creation which is the same as *Ka*, *Ūrdhva*, *Aja*, *Avyakta* etc. as mentioned above. He is conceived of as the Father in whom the ancient seed of creation inheres. The next in order is Parameshṭhī Prajāpati, that is the universal or *Mahat* or *Mahimā* released by the self-existent Brahman as his counterpart, which becomes the Mother principle or the womb to received the germ of creation (*Mama yonir mahad brahma tasmin garbhaṁ dadhāmyaham*, Gītā 14.3). The Father who layes the germ is Svayambhū (*Bijaprada Pitā*), and the Mother who becomes quick is Parameshṭhī. So the one Prajāpati becomes both the father and the mother as the two-halves of a single cosmic egg. These two symbolise the creative process on the plane of thought or in the mind of the Creator (*Mānasī sṛishṭi*). The next stage is represented by manifest creation in the form of Sūrya, who is the son of the two preceding parents of the universe and is named Hiraṇyagarbha Prajāpati. Sūrya and Pṛithivī are the parents of the manifest worlds. Each universe has its Sūrya and Pṛithivī, or for the matter of that each living form or individual centre has its *Dyāvā-Pṛithivī*. In

between them is Chandra, the symbol of Antariksha, with reference to which the latent powers of *Dyāvā-Pṛithivī* gain their oscillating potency to create the son on the plane of matter. Chandra corresponds to Brahmā Prajāpati, conceived of as floating in a lake of water, and Pṛithivī to Kaśyapa Prajāpati. These basic concepts find further elaboration in the Purāṇic descriptions, but taken together they symbolise a five-fold scheme designated by the single term Prajāpati. Sometimes Brahmā is spoken of as five-faced, the four faces placed according to the cardinal points and the fifth one on the top. In Mathura Brahmnical Iconography such images of Brahmā have been found. According to some legend the fifth head was clipped off by Rudra and then Brahmā became four-headed. The five heads are the same as given above, keeping the Svayambhū form as the topmost head or substratum of the rest.

BRAHMĀ AND HIS MYTHICAL ATTRIBUTES—Prajāpati Brahmā associated with a lake and a lotus. The lake is called *Brāhma-saras*, also Mānasarovara, that is the lake of Mind or of Buddhi. It is the Universal Mind or Super-mind, also called *Mahat*, from which the entire idealogical scheme of cosmic creation takes its rise in the mind of the Creator. The *Haṁsa* of Brahmā is the individual mind or the principle of Ego which creates differentiation in the universal consciousness as the essential basis of mani-

fested form. The lotus called *Pushkara* represents the principle of growth from within the primeval waters called *Āpaḥ*, *Nārāḥ*, *Salilam* or *Sarovara*. The Purāṇas sometimes identify Nārāyaṇa and Brahmā, and variantly speak of Brahmā springing from the navel of Vishṇu-Nārāyaṇa. This is referring to the same phenomenon through a differing symbolical idiom, but the fact remains that the principle of growth, activity, creation or *Rajas* emanates from that of Rest, Stasis (*Sthiti*) or Sleep (*Nidrā*) symbolised as Nārāyaṇa sleeping in the womb of the infinite ocean ( निद्रागत नारायण, शेषशायी विष्णु ).

WHAT IS PUSHKARA ?—What is *Pushkara* or the lotus is a question raised in the Brāhmaṇas. The answer is given that Agni is that lotus and Sūrya also is the cosmic lotus which serves as the support of Brahmā or the principle of growth identified with Life in its creational aspect having all the possibilities of existence. Thus both Agni on earth that is mortal life or Matter, and Sūrya in heaven that is the immortal divine source of Life universal, are the two lotuses vitalising each other which have sprung to the surface of a deep sea or the cosmic substratum of watery cold and frost (*Hima*). Some say that creation proceeds from Fire, others say that the creative act has its root in the Waters–both are partially right since the fundamental cause of progenition is burning waters or the combination of both the principle of heat and

cold (RV. I. 161.9, अग्निर्भूयिष्ठ इत्येको अब्रवीत् आपोभूयिष्ठ इत्येको अब्रवीत्).

PRAJĀPATI AS COSMIC RHYTHM—How does Prajāpati make himself manifest in his creation ? The answer to this question is that the Creator is visible everywhere, at every time and in every form. As has been said Prajāpati represents the basic rhythm of the cosmos and exists in the form of the three worlds, the three divisions of time and in the Three Persons which go into the making of each living being or *Purusha*. Each organism is the composite form of Mind, Life, and Matter or the *Vaiśvānara* Agni. Wherever we witness the rhythmic pulsation of Life we are face to face with Prajāpati. In each cell (*kosha*) this process is present as directed from an invisible neucleus or centre and made concrete in the form of a dual force as expansion and contraction. This is verily the nature of Prajāpati. The best visible symbol of Prajāpati is *Ahorātra*, the rotating cycle of Day and Night :—

*Ahorātro vai Prajāpatiḥ* (Praśna Up. 1.13)

The daily cyclic unit of time has the greatest meaning in the cosmic scheme, as typifying the basal dichotomy of Light and Darkness which signifies the emergence of two opposite forces locked for ever in collision and interplay as also in a happy blended and inseparable companionship. Like two sisters they role on for

ever on the unending path of Absolute Time. We are a witness to this miraculous phenomenon of Night and Day every moment. It is the charming poetry of the universal Creator which is ageless and deathless. Sun and Moon, Dawn and Evening, Mid-day and Mid-Night are but various steps in the dominant striding of Prajāpati as *Kāla*. Even so the two halves of the month are part of the same rhythm and are symbolised as Prajāpati :—

*Māso vai Prajāpatiḥ tasya kṛishṇa-paksha eva rātriḥ śuklaḥ prāṇaḥ* (Praśna Up. 1,12)

# Lecture IX

## YAJÑA-VIDYĀ

## [ यज्ञ-विद्या ]

YAJÑA–THE FOUNDATION OF VEDIC THOUGHT—The diverse points of view of which we have been speaking find their coherent enunciation in the doctrine of Yajña. Yajña is the foundation of Vedic thought and forms a complete theoretical statement of the metaphysical view-point of the Ṛishis and its practical application to human life. If Yajña is properly understood, everything else in the Veda may be comprehended as a matter of course. The Ṛigveda as the earliest document of Vedic thought gives us a fully developed picture of the Yajña formulation as applied to cosmic creation and human life. Yajña is grandiloquently conceived of as *Sarvahut* and *Kāmapra*. The former signifies that the creator made a complete offering of his Self in the sacrifice, of which we have witness in the cosmos and in Man. Out of his total personality, Purusha Prajāpati as the supreme divine power created on two levels, firstly on the plane of Thought and secondly on the plane of Matter. The creation is the Thought of the Creator. This Idea is referred to symbolically as Veda i. e. knowledge which existed as the essence of the maker

of these worlds (RV.X.99.9). Creation is primarily an Idea and all its archetypal forms were settled the mind of the Creator (*Mānasī sṛishṭi*). This mental dynamism was itself in the nature of a Yajña i. e. concentration of forces at a centre. The tremendous power thus brought into action found its fulfilment on the plane of Matter in the form of the visible worlds, referred to as *Paśu-sṛishṭi* i.e. manifest form of living being or creatures composed of the three principles of Mind, Life and Matter, as stated in the following mantra :—

तस्माद् यज्ञात्सर्वहुतः संभृतं पृषदाज्यम् ।
पशूस्तांश्चक्रे वायव्यानारण्यान्ग्राम्याश्च ये ।।

(RV. X. 90. 8).

It is a difficult mantra referring to two principles, firstly the *Prishadājya* and secondly the triple *Paśus*. The former refers to the gathering of the cosmic Seed, symbolised as the Butter churned out of the milk of the Cosmic Cow, i.e. Infinite Nature. This seed is also symbolised as Agni, Fire, Heat, Temparature or the dynamic power of Propulsion or contraction and expansion. Every seed becomes effective in creating a manifest form spoken of here as *Paśu*, a word ordinarily understood as cattle but actually referring to material manifestation of life or Prāṇic energy through which Prajāpati has brought all this into existence. It has three distinct forms referred to here as three living creatures, those of the air being Prāṇa, those of the forest Mind, and those of the

domestic animals moving in a herd as the five gross elements of Matter. Thus Prajāpati is fulfilling this *sarvahut* cosmic sacrifice and bringing into full effect all the powers of his Mind and Matter through the intermediatary agency of the Life-principle or Prāṇa. This triple composite organisation controlled from a centre is the pattern of Yajña.

YAJÑA–THE CENTRE—Yajña signifies the emergence of order from choas and of dynamic activity out of the womb of stillness or rest. The best definition of Yajña is furnished by Ṛigveda itself. The question is raised as to what is the centre of these created worlds, and the reply is furnished that the Yajña is the *Nābhi* or centre of the Universe :—

अयं यज्ञो भुवनस्य नाभिः (RV. I.164, 35).

The created worlds stand for the *Mahimā* of Prajāpati or of the Devas, i.e. the divine powers inherent in creation and that also is a Yajña, but the real Yajña is the controlling centre or the Naval of Immortality whose force is inexauhstible in time and place. Thus we witness in the cosmic process a two-fold Yajña, the one which is archetypal and divine and the other which descends to the plane of Matter. Such is the primeval plan according to which cosmic creation has been ordained :

यज्ञेन यज्ञमयजन्त देवास्तानि धर्माणि प्रथमान्यासन्
(RV. X. 90. 16).

CENTRE OF YAJÑA—The immortal centre of Yajña is spoken of as *Satya* or truth, namely a fixed stable principle for the operation of forces against the preceding disorderly or chaotic condition in which energy darts at will and cancels itself. Order is symbolised by Deva and disorder by Asura. Yajña demonstrates the assertion of the Deva principle by routing and expelling the Asuric forces of darkness. In the centre of each Yajña there is verily a Deva who is named as Agni or Indra or Vishṇu, etc.. Distinctions in the names of gods are material but basically lead to an identical position, namely the specialised manifestation of the Divine Energy at a particular point.

According to the Ṛigveda the mother principle giving birth to the cosmos is conceived of as the Waters named *Bṛihatīḥ Āpaḥ*, the Universal Ocean of primordeal Matter or Energy which bears in the womb the cosmos and gives birth to the dynamic principle of Agni and Yajña. The two mantras of the Hiraṇyagarbha Sūkta, X. 121. 7-8 are explicit on this point. Agni is explained there as the Prāṇic essence of all the gods (ततो देवानां समवर्ततासुरेकः). The question is asked how Yajña was created out of the still waters whose greatness becomes manifest as the cosmos, and the reply is given that the waters created the principle of Yajña and they had a vision of Daksha who is the presiding deity or power i.e. the

efficient principle underlying all Yajñas (यश्चिदापो महिना पर्यपश्यद् दक्षं दधाना जनयन्तीर्यज्ञम्, RV. X. 121.8).

YAJÑA—A SYNTHESIS OF BASIC DUALITY—Yajña implies a synthesis of a basic duality called Agni and Soma. Agni is the son and the Soma is the mother. These two terms have manifold connotations but basically their union is essential for the completion of Yajña. Agni is the eater of the food and Soma is food as explained before. When the fiery energy of Agni becomes kindled at a centre or in an individual organism it must be sustained or kept alive by food. Every kind of food given to plant, animal or man is its Soma. Agni everywhere is Vaiśvānara, the Life-principle which comes into manifest form by the awakening of an invisible nucleus or seed. Each organism is therefore rightly called a living being comprised of the two opposite but accordant principles of Energy and Fuel (*Agnīshomīya paśu*). The cosmos also is similarly explained (*Agnīshomātmakam jagat*). The fuel-stick, butter and other oblations are only variant forms of Soma. The dominant principles of Growth, Assimilation and Procreation are dependent on the union of Agni and Soma in each life-cell. This is the basic form of Yajña.

TRIVṚIT—The Vedas speak of Yajña as threefold, viz. undifferentiated Reality becoming transformed into a Triad (*Trivṛit*). There are any number of

explanations possible of the trinitarian constitution of the Cosmos and many of them have been pointed out in the earlier discourses. Even modern science would be quite justified in offering its own explanation of such Triads. Suffice it to say that the one Prāṇic energy takes the form of a rhythm manifesting on the two sides of a centre and named Prāṇa, Apāna and Vyāna, or the three Fires in the ritual. The three Devas, Lokas, Meters are variant formulations or points of view all of which are valid. These three parts make up a complete revolving wheel which is spoken of as tricentric (*Trināḅhi*). It is often stated that Manu, Aṅgiras and Nahusha established the norm of Yajña in the primeval ages, and since then there has not been the least alteration in its details. Men of today should do as Manu of yore did. The law of life in the individual and in the cosmos is a testimony of the unalterable nature of these two-fold Yajñas. This is visible as the revolving Wheel of Time (*Kāla-chakra*), also called *Saṁvatsara-chakra*, and the *Yajña-chakra* according to which Prajāpati has created all beings. Past, Present and Future, Birth, Growth and Decay are the triple strides of Vishṇu whose attribute is *Chakra*. There is no end to the multifarious statements about Vishṇu and the Time Wheel and the Yajña over which he presides, but they all imply a basic truth which is the law of all manifestation. Time is the Great Bird (*Garutmā*

*Suparṇa*) whose flapping wings carry Vishṇu through all space and time.

COSMIC YAJÑA CONCEIVED OF AS SEVEN THREADS—The cosmic sacrifice is said to be a grand web woven with omniform threads and being fulfilled by one hundred one divine powers (*Yo yajño viśvatas-tantubhis tata ekaśataṁ deva karmebhir āyataḥ*, RV. X. 130.1). The weaving is accomplished by a rhythm consisting of a forward and backward movement directed by the so called Parents (*Pitaraḥ*) or the Father-Mother principles innate at every centre of universal manifestation. The number of threads is also spoken of as seven and each Yajña is on that basis called *Sapta-tantu*. The exact nature of the Seven Threads may be diversely explained, but it is valid to understand them as the seven over-riding principles of Mind, Life and Matter with its five gross elements. Without the composite working of these Seven there would be no manifest creation.

PAÑCH-YĀMA—A significant epithet of Yajña is *Pañcha-yāma* (RV. X. 124.1), i. e. having a five-fold course on the basis of which Yajña is known as *Pāṅkta*. This is the earliest reference to the *Pañchī-karaṇa* doctrine according to which every manifest form should have a pentad as its basis, e. g. the five sheaths on the plane of the Mind (*Pañcha kośa*), five-fold differentiation of Prāṇic energy (*Pañcha-prāṇa*) and the five elements of Matter. This is the structure

of Shoḍaśī Prajāpati by including the immortal essence as the substratum of all.

EIGHT POINTS OF YAJÑA EXPLAINED—When once the model of Yajña was accepted with reference to the birth of the cosmos and the manifestation of Life in it, many attendant details were worked out. For example, enunciating the principle of Yajña the following eight questions are raised :—

कासीत्प्रमा प्रतिमा किं निदानमाज्यं किमासीत् परिधिः क आसीत्।
छन्दः किमासीत् प्रउगं किमुक्थं यदेवा देवमयजन्त विश्वे॥
(RV. X. 130.3)

1. *Pramā*—The Creator had to settle at the outset the measure or dimension of the Yajña manifesting in space and time. This doctrine of *Pramā* was later on termed as *Iyattā* ( इयत्ता ) by the Bhagavatas. The cosmos is conceived of as a measuring out and at all levels it is governed by a predetermined geometrical scale whose dominance is being witnessed within the minute atom and the cell or the vast solar systems, as also within the fleeting moments or the vast aeons of Time.

2. *Pratimā*—The second principle is that of *Pratimā*, the Archetypal or Model according to which all forms take their shape. This was later on termed as the doctrine of *Idriktā* ( ईदृक्ता ) or Suchness, a kind of *Tathā* underlying each manifest identity. This model existed in Prajāpati himself. He was the

Archetypal form (*Prathama-chchhada*, RV. X. 81.1), and as such entered all the subsequent forms. Each ritualistic Yajña in the form of *Agnihotra*, *Darśa-Paurṇamāsa*, *Chāturmāsya*, *Ayaneshṭi*, *Saṁvatsara*, has its basis or model in terms of the rotating time-wheel and in the intricate processes of its accomplishing the creative processes.

3. *Nidāna*—The principle of *Nidāna* (*ādi-kāraṇa*, *Sāyaṇa*) refers to the material cause that lies at the root of each created form.

4. *Ājya*—The next principle is that of *Ājya*, Butter which stands for the seed of the cosmos churned out of the milk of the Cosmic Cow. That seed in effect is the principle of Agni without which no Yajña becomes possible. The Father of creation, Svayambhū Prajāpati puts his seed in the cosmic Mother or Virāj ; the latter represents his own majesty or extended greatness and his germ develops in the womb of the mother. From the union of these two Parents the embodied Purusha called Hiraṇyagarbha takes his birth. The principle of *Ājya* or *Retas* is essential as the medium through which the divine powers (*Devāḥ*) make entry into each physical organism, and occupy their respective stations throughout life.

5. *Paridhi*—For each Yajña there are seven enveloping boundaries called *Paridhi* (RV. X. 130.3, *paridhiḥ ka āsīt* ; RV. X. 90. 15, *Saptāsyāsan paridha-*

*yaḥ*). The seven bounds in which the whole system of Yajña remains emboxed intercommunicate with each other by intricate physical, vital and psycical laws governing the seven principles of Mind, Life and Matter. These are also spoken of as the seven cells of egg (*Aṇḍasya saptāvaraṇāni*) in the Purāṇas (Bhāg. 6.16.37; Liṅga 1.3.18-39, 1.87.19-20 ; Matsya 248. 1-10). In fact they form the foundation of the later cosmogonic thought in the form of *Mahat*, *Ahaṅkāra* and *Pañcha-Mahābhūtas*. The perimeter of each Yajña is determined at the time of its inception, the two principles of *Pramā* and *Paridhi* being inter-related.

6. *Chhandas*—The next principle of Yajña is *Chhandas* or Rhythm which is originally one but is seen in manifestation as a pulsation of divergent forces. For the Vedic seers, cosmisation is rhythmisation. The entire creation is conceived of as a three-fold rhythm named *Gāyatra*, *Traishṭubha*, *Jāgata* (RV. I.164.23). The three metres in turn become the seven metres, i.e. form one octave as the unit of the vibration of energy as seven rays of Light or seven waves of Sound moving together in one band and metaphorically spoken of as Seven Sisters. The divine chariot of the cosmos and of the human body moves ceaselessly and the Seven Sisters or the seven-fold Prāṇic energy sings songs of praise (*Sapta svasāro abhisaṁnavante*, RV. I.164.3). The one basic Reality transforms itself into Duality, the same becomes a Triad and the latter

becomes a Heptad. Such is the inevitable law of manifestation, either we discover it in terms of *Chhandas*, or *Prāṇa*, or light rays as the seven horses of the Sun, or *Vāk* comprising the seven syllables or notes (*Akshareṇa mimate sapta vāṇīḥ*, RV. I.164.24). Creation is the outcome of movement, pulsation, contraction and expansion, agitation, throbbing, rhymic beating, vibration, quivering, or an ecstatic thrill in the mind of the Creator. The following mantras speak of the seven metres and their seven presiding deities as Gāyatrī (Agni), Ushṇik (Savitā), Anushṭup (Soma), Bṛihatī (Bṛihaspati), Virāṭ (Mitrāvaruṇa), Trishṭup (Indra) and Jagatī (Viśvadeva). The cosmos is formed of Matter, and matter of the five elements which together are symbolised as *Vāk*. *Vāk* is composed of sound waves of syllables, which are measured out with differing syllabic quantities as six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven and twelve, giving birth to a musical rhythm of far-reaching sweetness, harmony and dynamism. The Ṛishis recapture these beauties through the chanting and recitational rites in the Yajña.

7 & 8. *Prauga* and *Uktha*—The next two principles of Yajña are referred to as *Prauga* and *Uktha*, the former signifying the recitation of the Rik verses and the latter the chanting of the Sāman songs. The Ṛik and Sāma together form an inseparable pair, the one supporting the other and they are spoken of as the two

Bay Steeds of Indra by which the cosmic car and the individual organism receive their movement (*Ṛik-sāmābhyāṁ pra rathaṁ vartayanti*, RV. X. 114.6 ; *Ṛik-sāme vai Indrasya harī*, ŚB 4.4.3.6). *Prauga* and *Uktha*, or *Ṛik* and *Sāma* represent two principles, namely the diameter and the circumference of each *Maṇḍala* by which the visible manifest form round a centre is created. The centre itself is symbolised as *Yajus* and the three together form one system.

PURUSHA AS PROTOTYPE OF YAJÑA—It is stated that Purusha extends the warp and Purusha unbinds the same (RV. X 130.2), referring to the universal Virāṭ Purusha and the individuated Purusha who follows the model of the Virāṭ. The Purusha creates the *Pura* and he enters it. Each *Pura* is typical of a Yajña surrounded by a sanctifying divine fire and having the form of a shed (*sadas*) in which the sacred fire is installed. This is the ancient sacrifice (*Purāṇa Yajña*, RV. X. 130.6) in which the principal deity is the one Supreme Deva whom all other gods are sacrificing or offering as oblation (*Yad devā devam ayajanta viśve*, RV. X. 130.3). The conception of the cosmic Yajña and of its microcosmic type is simplified by stating that the forefathers wrought it of old and it is moving according to the path settled by them (*Pūrveshāṁ panthām*, RV. X.130.7), i.e. the whole system of Yajña is preordained from beginning to end, and man should evolve his

happiness by conforming to it in the minutest detail. The drama is being enacted on a grand scale in the constellations and on a minute scale in the living cell and the physical atom, all following an archetypal Yajña with its accessory detailed paraphernalia. Although the terminology of our explanation may differ the dominant working at all levels is derived from an identical pattern working out through energy and matter. The various principles of *Yajamāna*, *Purohita*, *Ṛitvij*, *Deva*, *Samidhaḥ*, *Vedi*, *Paridhi*, *Ājya*, *Havis*, etc. lead us to an intricate ritual familiar in Vedic thought, intended to convey through symbolic definitions the working of Prāṇic energy both in the microcosm and the macrocosm. The Brahmanical exegetes help us in understanding it by throwing frequent suggestions of its *adhyātma* and *adhidaivata* intimations. For example, the principle of Yajamāna who is the focus of a Yajña is identified as the principle of Mind (*Mano Yajamānasya rūpam*, ŚB. 12.8.2.4). Prajāpati himself becomes the Yajamāna of each Yajña. He is Indra, he is Agni; all these are valid statements. In the later Ashṭamūrti doctrine of the Māheśvara Śiva teachers Mind is designated as *Ugra*, as *Dīkshita*, the initiated one who is the source of consciousness in each created system (*Chaitanyam ugrād iva dīkshitena*, Raghuvaṁśa, 5. 4, see also the older commentaries of Hemādri and others).

YAJÑA AT THREE LEVELS—Similarly there should be a Purohita for each Yajña, and since Yajña is being performed on three levels there is a Purohita for each Loka. According to the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa Agni is the Purohita of Pṛithivī, Vāyu of Antariksha and Āditya of Dvauḥ. Looking this ritualistic formulation, we may understand Agni as the controlling principle of Matter, Vāyu of Prāṇa or the vital functionings, and Sūrya of mind. For the Ṛishis and the traditional exegetes these definitions were patent and adequate to explain the workings of Nature at several levels.

SAṂVATSARA AND PURUSHA AS YAJÑA—As explained above the two basic forms of Yajña should be noted, firstly *Saṁvatsara* as Yajña and secondly Purusha as Yajña. The revolving wheel of Time and the created energy comprehended within a particular period of time, both are the essential elements of a single or unified process. The movement of the earth from one fixed point to another marks a unit of time, but this is merely an appearance and no reality. This is known as *Kālachakra*. During that limit of time, whatever matter is drawn within the orbit of an organism as a result of its Prāṇic pulsation, that becomes visible and is the form of Yajña Purusha. By this law the annual rings within the trees are formed and all organic matter in men, animals and plants grows under the dynamic rhythm of time.

We may conceive of the substance and rhythm as the two aspects of the same reality, the former corresponding to the *Yajña Purusha* or *Nārāyaṇa* and the second to his *Suparṇa* called *Chhandomaya Garuḍa*. The rhythm in the solar rays is not an empty vibration, it is created and is purposeful, transforming matter into energy and energy into matter. This two-fold phenomenon is strange but it exists. *Prāṇa* is being converted into *Bhūta* and *Bhūta* into Prāṇa.

*Ahorātra, Darśa-Paurṇamāsa, Chāturmāsa, Ayana, Saṁvatsara* are types of rotation of the Time Wheel and become the models of several sacrifices. Similarly the second aspect of Yajña as Purusha is exemplified in the Soma Yajñas and in the Agni Yajñas.

SYMBOLISM OF RITUALS—The intake of food into a living centre and the intricate processes by which the incoming organic products are assimilated is symbolised in the Soma *Yāga*. The reception of Soma, its crushing by the two stones (which symbolise Prāṇa and Apāna), the extraction of juice, its straining, mixing with milk and finally drinking, although cast in the language of an elaborate ritual, are purposive and directed to explain what is happening within the body, so far as its many secretions produced and refined by the metabolic fire are concerned. How *Bhūta* or matter becomes accumulated or assimilated in the body is exemplified by the Soma-Yāgas. On the other

hand how energy or Prāṇa is stock-piled or multiplied is shown by the Agnishṭoma-yāgas. In ritual they respectively speak of collecting the Soma in the *Droṇa kalaśa* or the wooden vat, and of putting the fire in the Ukhā (*Ukhā saṁbharaṇa*), the two processes of the accumulation of the various secretions and of their chemicophysical reactions to strengthen the sheaths of vitality and mind happen simultaneously within the body and are inseparable. Systematic investigation on the comprehensive meaning of these various Yajñas as explained in the Brāhmaṇas and also embodied in the Saṁhitās is a subject of wider import and surely vital to Vedic interpretation. The elaboration of the Agnishṭoma Yajña in the form of the 36 Cups (*Shaṭtriṁśa graha*, RV. X. 114.6), and of Aty-agnishṭoma with an additional 4 Cups goes to remotest antiquity and the enumeration as well as the explanation of these Cups as found in the Yajurveda of both the White and Black Schools as well as in their Brāhmaṇas is a unique chapter of great esoteric value. Each *Graha* or *Indriya* is a symbol of the power of Indra, the deity of each Yajña, and the first Cup named *Upāṁsu* is said to be born with all the potential powers that are in immortal Heaven and on mortal Earth (*Divya Pārthiva Indriya*). We would not enter into a detailed study of these Cups but suffice it to say that these have been ordained with reference to the biological and psychological

principles essential in the making of *Purusha* or each organism.

PRĀṆIC ENERGY—It should be clearly understood that the essential element of Yajña is Prāṇic energy; there can be no Yajña without Prāṇa, wherein Prāṇa stands for the Life-principle (*Yajñasya hotā prāṇaḥ*, KB. 9.6). Yajña comprehends the working of life in all creatures, namely that it is typical for every living organism and is therefore called *bhujya* (*Yajño hi sarvāṇi bhutāni bhunakti*, ŚB. 9.4.1.11). We are told that the mighty Divine Principle (*Mahodevaḥ*) has entered all mortal beings (RV. IV. 58.3). The Gopatha explains this great divinity to be Yajña itself (*Esha ha vai mahān devo yad yajñaḥ*, GB. 1.2.16). In the Śatapatha Yajña is identified with the principle of Deva and Sūrya (*Ahar devah Sūryah*, ŚB. 1. 1. 2. 21), implying that Darkness, Asura and Matter are the opposite of Yajña. The great Creator can only become manifest through Yajña (*Esha vai pratyakshaṁ yajño yatprājāpatih*, ŚB. 4.3.4.3).

Yajña is the very self of all the mortal creatures and the immortal beings (*Sarveshāṁ vā esha bhūtānāṁ sarveshāṁ devānāmātmā yad yajñaḥ*, ŚB. 14. 3. 2. 1). Yajña is exemplified as *Deva-ratha*, on which all the worlds have their support (*Deva-ratho vā esha yadyajñah*, AB. 3.37, KB. 7.7.). These statements are not mere *arthavāda*. They illustrate metaphysical truths which

underlie the several view-points of the Ṛishis with respect to creation.

AGNI AS YAJÑA—The basic explanation of the Yajña doctrine is that Yajña is Agni where Agni stands for the mysterious principle of Life manifesting itself on the plane of Matter (*Agnir vai yonir yajñasya*, ŚB. 1.5.2.11-14 ; *Agnir vai yajñamukham*, TB. 1.6.1.8). There should be not the least doubt that Yajña is not merely a mental process or limited to an idea, it must descend to the level of Matter (*Vāg yajñasya rūpam*, ŚB. 12.8.2.4). All the creatures that were born and that will be born are under the influence of Yajña, i.e. the regulated system of which we know so well through the several sciences under Biology, Psychology etc. . The healing agent of Yajña is said to be the principle of Akshara or immortal Prāṇa which plugs all the loop-holes in the working of the physical body and rectifies all its faults (*Akshareṇaiva yajñasya chchhidrampidadhāti*, Tāṇḍya 8.6.13).

It is evident that *Yajña-Vidyā and Sṛishṭi Vidyā* are identical in contents and co-extensive in connotation.

# Lecture X

## PURUSHA-SŪKTA

## [ पुरुष-सूक्त ]

ARGUMENTS—The Purusha-sūkta (Rv. X. 90.1-16) is characteristic of Vedic style being rooted in ritual terminology and yet teeming with a dominant symbolism that asserts its cosmogonic purpose in emphatic terms. Its importance has always been recognised in Indian tradition ; for example as the Bhāgavatas made full use of its detailed imagery with respect to Purusha as Ananta Nārāyaṇa, Virāj and Hiraṇyagarbha.

The Ṛishi of the hymn is Nārāyaṇa and the Deity is Purusha. There are many arguments underlying the whole Sūkta. Who is this Purusha ? Why is he called *Thousand-headed* ? What is the meaning of *Thousand* ? What is indicated by the triple conception of Heads, Eyes and Feet ? What is the implication of *Bhūmi* encompassed on all sides by Purusha ? What is the meaning of *Aty-atishṭhad* ? Who is *Daśāṅgulam* ? What is *Idamsarvam* ? What is the meaning of *Amṛita* transcending *Anna* ? What again is the significance of *Anna* ? What is the omnipotent principle of *Mahimā* ? How is Purusha greater than his *Mahimā* ? What is the meaning of

*Tripād* and *Ekpād* and of *Ūrdhva* and *Iha* ? What is *Vyakrāmat*, the procession of Purusha on all sides ? What is the meaning of *Sāśana* and *Anaśana* ?

What is *Virāj* and how she was created by Purusha ? Who was the Purusha created out of the union of Shahasra-śīrshā Purusha and Virāj ? How he ranges between earth and heaven ? How Purusha himself became the offering in the primeval sacrifice planned by the Devas ? What is the part played by the three seasons in that *Kālātmaka* Yajña ? What were the three components of offering in the primal sacrifice ? What is the meaning of the besprinkling of the *Kuśa* grass ? When the primeval Agra Purusha was born ? Who were the *Sādhya Devas* and who were the Rishis who made this sacrifice ? What is the meaning of *Sarvahut Yajña* and why should there be a repetition of this sacrifice in Mantras 8 and 9 ? What is the meaning of *Pṛishadājya* in the context of cosmic Yajña ? What is the principle of *Paśu* and who are the three-fold *Paśus* ? What is the significance of the three Vedas born out of the *Sarvahut* sacrifice of Prajāpati ? What are the five sacrificial animals of Mantra 10 ? What is the significance of the four social classes in Mantras 11 and 12 ? What is the conception of the Virāṭ form in Mantras 13 and 14 ? Why should Moon be related to the Mind of the Creator and Sun to the Eye ? Why both Indra and Agni be associated with the Mouth ? What is

the meaning of the seven *Paridhis* and of the twenty-one Fire-sticks ? which is the Yūpa for fastening the Purusha as animal in the sactifice ? What are the two Yajña and how Yajña was performed by Yajña ? What is the meaning of *Prathama-dharma* ? Who are the *Mahimānaḥ* and what is the meaning of *Nāka*, the abode of the *Sādhya Devas* ?

These are the arguments which should be faced and clarified in order to understand the true significance of this Sūkta.

SAHASRA PURUSHA—In the first mantra *Sahasra* stands for the infinite universal and transcedent Purusha. He is Svayambhū, the Self-existent One, who dominates everything else in his own right as the ultimate reality and final category beyond which there is nothing to be conceived of. In the Brāhmaṇas, the word *Sahasra* and *Śata* are contrasted, the former denoting the divine and the latter the human enunciations ( भूमा वै सहस्रम् ŚB. 3.3.3.8 ; परमं सहस्रम्, Tāṇḍya 16. 1.2 ; सर्वं वै तद्यत् सहस्रम्, KB. II. 5). There are two categories, viz. that of the *Sahasra Purusha* and secondly that of the *Daśāṅgula Purusha*. The former is the universal, divine and immortal, and the latter the manifest and material, Purusha. A *thousand* here is not the double of five hundred but emphatically refers to the infinite as clearly stated in the other adaptations of this mantra where that Purusha is referred

to as *Viśvatomukha, Viśvataschakshu, Viśvataspād* (RV. X. 81.3).

THREEFOLD PURUSHA—Heads, Eyes and Feet are symbolical of three points of view with respect to the creative act. Either we look at the cosmos in its source in the unmanifest (*Śiromūlā dṛishṭi*), or in its finite form in the manifest (*Pādamūlā dṛishṭi*), or in the systhesis of the two where the *Chākshusha Purusha* stands for the composite symbol of the divine and material manifestations. It is a reference to the threefold nature of Purusha which is the basis of the cosmos. The Svayambhū Purusha originally is an introvert principle with only one centre, having withdrawn all its *Mahimā* into his womb, but for the sake of creation he becomes tricentric (*Trinābhi*), i.e. splits himself into two and in order to keep them separate stands between them as the third. The Vedic triad of the Devas, Lokas and Vedas are exemplified in the triple Purusha. In the second line of the mantra *Bhūmi* or earth is inseparable with *Dyauḥ*, which although not mentioned is certainly implied. *Dyāvābhūmi* is the unit of individual manifestation enveloped on all sides by the transcendent Deva. The *Daśāṅgula Purusha* is the individuated Deva, the manifested Person standing on *ten fingers* of the feet. The transcendent divinities (*Atishṭhāvā devatāḥ*) are Agni, Vāyu and Āditya whose divine majesties enter the Daśāṅgula Purusha standing on the earth in material manifestation.

IDAṀ SARVAM—*Idaṁ sarvam* stands for the visible creation or material world ; its complete identity with Purusha is here intended, both in spatial and temporal projections; within these time-space relata the cosmos is in the grip of death. There is an *Amṛita* or immortal Reality, which transcends the cosmos or *Anna*. All matter is food (*Anna*) and all *Prāṇa* is the Eater of food, the former is mortal and the latter is *Amṛitam*.

MAHIMĀ—In mantra 3 *Mahimā* refers to the majesty of greatness of the created cosmos within the categories of space and time. There is no end to the greatness of Purusha, both in the macrocosmic form as spread in the vast stellar spaces, and within the minute particles of matter. They are inscrutable either to the human mind or to the instruments of science. Indeed all speech falls short in expressing the infinite nature of the universe visible to us. Silence, eternity, Plenum, *Pūrṇam*, *Amṛitam* are some of the super-principles applicable to Purusha, the truth of whose being is infinitely greater than his Nature.

TRIPĀD—It is usual to speak of Purusha or Brahman as four-footed; one fourth of Him is measured out as the cosmos and three-fourths of Him transcends all manifestation. The Tripād is also called *Ūrdhva* and *Amṛita* and in this source the cosmic Tree of Existence has its root. If we look at

Brahman as the immortal source we speak of him as comprised of three parts and of the cosmos as one part. This relationship is reversed when the world is said to represent the three feet of Brahman and the Absolute Reality is said to be symbolised as the fourth feet. As a matter of fact several arithmetical statements are valid; e. g. if the Absolute Brahman is one thousand, the relative world are only one part of him. Sometimes the immortal Brahman is spoken of as one-half and the mortal world as the other half. All this is included under the *Parāvara-Vidyā* in which the two relative categories stand out as the Upper and Lower; without this division the categories of space and time would not come into existence.

DYĀVĀ-PṚITHIVĪ UNIT—In mantra 4 an all-round procession of Purusha is predicated. This refers to an over-riding movement as the basic impulse of creation which worked out the divisions of Space and Time as a simultaneous action. The two words *Sāśana* and *Anaśana* refer to animate and inanimate beings, typifying the two-fold division of *Chara* and *Achara*, of *Amṛita* and *Martya*, of *Deva* and *Bhūta*,

In verse 5 there is reference to the creation of Virāj, the Mother principle or universal infinite nature, also called *Mahat* and *Yoni*, the womb which receives the seed of creation from Svayambhū or the Self-existent Brahman, or the thousand-headed Purusha. Svayambhū is also called *Svarāṭ* in contrast to this

opposite principle of Virāj. *Virāj* is also called *Parameshṭhī* and *Ṛita* or *Soma* and *Apaḥ*. The two principles of *Svayambhū* and *Virāj* enter into union as Father and Mother, and give birth to the next Purusha called *Daśāṅgula*, or Vairāja (son of Virāj), also named Vairāja Manu exemplified in each individual manifest form.

MEANING OF VIRĀJ AND NĀRĀYṆA—In this context three categories should be clearly distinguished, the first is Svayambhū, the second Virāj and the third Vairāja Purusha. The first is the Father, the second is the Mother and the third is the Son. Both the first two are unmanifest, but the son as Sūrya and Vaiśvānara is manifest. There is also another pair of names preserved in the conception of Narāyaṇa Purusha, often explained in the Purāṇas and the Bhāgavata tradition. According to this the Father principle *Svayambhū* is called *Nara*, the mother principle *Virāj* is called *Nāra* which is the same as *Apaḥ*, the Waters or Soma-Parameshṭhī (cf. *Āpo vai nara-sūnavaḥ, Manu*). The offspring produced by the union of these two universal parents is called Nārāyaṇa who is the same as Sūrya, Hiraṇyagarbha, Manu, Agni, Indra, Prāṇa, etc. . Once the validity of these definitions is clearly grasped there would be little difficulty in understanding the Purāṇic statements about Nārāyaṇa as the Person at the root of cosmo-

gonic formulation. The following śloka of Manu states the position clearly :—

आपो नारा इति प्रोक्ता आपो वै नरसूनवः।
ता यदस्यायनं प्रोक्तं तस्मान्नारायणः स्मृतः॥

(Manu)

*Nara-Nāra-Nārāyaṇa*, is the unified sūtra of the triple principles of creation. Both in its transcedent and immanent aspects every organism, cell, minute particle of matter, solar-system or vast expanded universe has its archetypal form in the Nārāyaṇa-Hiraṇyagarbha principle. The principle of Life that is quick in its centre is Nārāyaṇa. He is the son of *Virāj* and spoken of as *Vairāja Manu*, referred to in the mantra as *Virājo adhi pūrushaḥ*. The various names of one and the same principle here implied under Vairāja are recounted in the following śloka of Manu :—

एतमेके वदन्त्यग्निं मनुमन्ये प्रजापतिम्।
इन्द्रमेके परे प्राणमपरे ब्रह्म शाश्वतम्॥

(XII. 123)

AGRA-JĀTA PURUSHA—The second half of mantra 5 is a bit involved in construction and also meaning. The word *Jāta* here refers to the Son of Virāj known as Vairāja Purusha, or Manu, or Hiraṇya-garbha. In Ṛigveda X. 121.1, Hiraṇyagarbha is named as *Jāta* and said to be *Bhūtapati*, i.e. the principle of Prāṇa as manifested in Matter. Each organism is a

type of *Bhūtapati*, *Jāta*, *Hiraṇyagarbha* and *Vairāja*. *Jāta* also means a Babe and the manifested *Prāṇa* is spoken of in the Brāhmaṇas as *Kumāra*. Each *Kumāra* creates for himself *Dyāvāpṛithivī* as his range of functioning both from within as centre and outside it with the immortal divine principle enveloping on all sides. This is referred to by the phrase *Bhūmi* which also emplies *Dyauḥ*, or by *Paśchāt* and *Purastāt* which form a pair. Dyauḥ is *Purastāt* and Bhūmi is *Paśchāt*, symbolically the two-halves of a single Egg in which the golden germ finds its new habitation for a full session of life. This Babe represents the principle of Prāṇa mentioned as *Devānām asuḥ* (RV. X. 121.7). The manifestation of the life-force from its embrionic centre of source is conceived of as a welling out of the reserves of force referred to as *Atyrichyata*, also *praririche*, (RV. I. 164.25). As gushing flood of energy the life-force swells both outwards as well as inwards touching the mortal and immortal levels, the one in matter referred to as *Mahitvā* and the other linked to the divine majesty as *Mahnā* (RV. I. 164.25, *tato mahnā pra ririche mahitvā*). The dynamic life-force has several names, one of them being *Gāyatra* also conceived of on two levels, viz. material and divine (*Yad gāyatre adhi gāyatram āhitam*, (RV. I. 164.23). When born life centre or the Babe begins to unfold its possibilities of manifestation in three successive stages named as the three metres or the three fuel-sticks whose blazing

trail is Life (*Gāyatrasya samidhas tisra āhuḥ*, RV. I. 164.25).

PRIMEVAL YAJÑA—Mantra 6 envisages a primeval sacrifice with the person as offering. This Purusha is the Deva principle mentioned several times in other mantras, e. g. *Yad Devā Devam avajanta Viśve* (Rv. X. 130.3). This primeval Yajña is organised by all the Gods (*Devā Yajñam atanvata*), The thousand-headed Purusha offers himself as the omniform oblation in this first sacrifice. He as the transcendent Purusa creates all the subsequent forms. He is called *Prathamachchhad*, the Archetypal, and sets the norm for all those who follow his model (*Avarān āviveśa*). The foundation or the basic pattern of the sacrifice is that of trinity, symbolised here as the three seasons—Vasanta, Grīshma, and Śarad which form the three spokes of the rotating wheel of Time or *Saṁvatsara*. These correspond to the three elements of *Dravya* Yajña, viz. Butter, Fuel and offering. The supreme nature of Yajña is exemplified in manifold triads of which we have been speaking. The three Gods, Vasus, Rudras and Ādityas also make up the integrated corpus of this wheel. Even so, the three Devas—Agni, Vāyu and Āditya. the three Lokas—Pṛithivī, Antariksha and Dyauḥ, the three metres—Gāyatrī, Trishṭup and Jagatī, the three pressings in the sacrifice, the three priests. the three Prāṇas are some of the trinitarian principles of cosmic manifestation which lie at the root of the creative rhythm.

SECONDARY YAJÑA—A clear idea of the second Yajña is given in Mantra 7 where Purusha, *Jāta*, *Agra* and *Yajña* are corresponding entities all referring to the principle of Vairāja Purusha or Vairāja Manu to which we have already referred as Hiraṇyagarbha and Nārāyaṇa.

BARHIS AND PRAJĀ—This Manu was Prajāpati and all the *Prajās* or creatures were created by him; a reference to this occurs in the first part of the Mantra—तं यज्ञं बर्हिषि प्रौक्षन्, where the word *Barhis* stands for *Prajā* as explained in the Brāhmaṇa literature (KB. 5.7, 18.10; TB. 1.6.3.10; ŚB. 1.5.3.16, 2.6.1.13, 4.4.5.14; GB. 1.1.24), *Barhis* is also *Paśu* and *Aushadhi* (AB. 5.28; ŚB. 1.3.3.9, 1.8.2.11, 1.9.2.29; TB. 2.1.5.1). All the *Prajās* or creatures that are born are in the nature of men, animals and plants, for the simple reason that there is a uniform law of life at all these three levels and each one of them depends for its sustenance on food or Soma. *Barhis* is, therefore, the manifest form of Agni or the life-principle on the plane of matter. The birth of Manu is accompanied by the creation of *Prajās* or manifold forms. Each *Prajā* is like an offshoot of the cosmic tree kept green by the sap called Soma. The word *Praukshan* is significant in this context. The whole mechanism of organic life consists of minute cellular structure swhose biological efficiency is derived from the sap or secretions which saturate them and are known to

us under so many scientific names, jointly referred to as *Rasātmaka Soma* (*Pushṇāmi chaushadhīḥ sarvāḥ Somo bhūtvāraeātmakaḥ, Gītā* 15.13). *Barhis* is strewn on the altar of the sacrifice representing as it were the inticrate grid for the flow of energy and secretions which predominate the sacrificial system. The two principles of *Barhis* and *Praukshan* are essential for the performance of the sacrifice.

SĀDHYA DEVAS—The primeval sacrifice of the first Purusha was laid out by the *Sādhya Devas* and the *Ṛishis*. There are two things here to be specially noted, namely that the word *Sādhya* is an epithet of Deva and secondly that there is a distinction between Deva and Ṛishi. The Ṛishis represent the primeval principle of mind or of Prāṇa called *Asat* (ŚB. 6.1.1.1), and the *Sādhya Devas* of the principle of Prāṇa called *Sat*, i.e. life as becoming manifest in matter, as explained in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa-*Prāṇā Vai Sādhyā Devas, ta etaṁ* (*Prajāpatim*) *agra evam asādhayam* (ŚB. 10.2.2.3). These are the different stages in the creative process, the first is that of ideas or the mind also referred to as *Ṛishi, Chhanda, Veda*, etc. mentioned in mantra 9. This is called the *Asat-sṛishṭi*, and the subsequent one is the *Sat-Sṛishṭi* in which the principle of mind descends to the level of matter. The first one is the *Pūrvya yuga* and the second the *Uttara yuga* (RV. X. 72. 1-2).

The word *Sādhya* as an epithet of Deva signifies the primeval powers or the archetypal principles, i.e. the differentiated forms emanating from an undifferentiated source. The *Sādhya Devas* are conceived of as *Pūrva Devas* i.e., the divine powers latent in the source, beyond material modification, said to be the perfected Ones in comparison to the angelic powers of Devas that enter into the act of creation. The abode of *Sādhya Devas* is the region of *Nāka*, a place of eternal bliss and happiness unaffected by any kind of material stress or modification (RV. X. 90.16).

ANIMALS--The two kinds of creations at mortal levels are explicitly mentioned in verses 8 and 9, the lower one is *Paśū-sṛishṭi* (verse 8) and the higher one is *Veda-sṛishṭi* (verse 9). In modern terms we may refer to them as Form and Idea. Both of them are two Yajñas, the one productive of the other and thus completing the rhythm—*Yajñena Yajñam ayajanta devāḥ* (RV. X. 90.16). Both of these respectively refer to the conscious mind and the super mind which interact on each other and become effective in an endless dynamism, as seen in the manifestation of life. For creating manifest animal form some kind of germinal seed is essentially required which is referred to as *Prishad Ajyam* (Mantra 8).

SHOWER OF BUTTER–Its literal meaning is a shower of minute particles of butter or *ghṛita*. The symbolism

of Butter has been explained in an earlier Lecture. *Ghṛita* is the symbol of the fecundating germ by which the animal form is begotten and which is identified with Agni. Agni is the seed and Soma is the mother or womb, and the union of the two is essential for generating living forms. In the beginning of creation there existed the Mother-principle in the form of *Apaḥ* or Waters, which were churned by the primeval world-building forces as a result of which the principle of heat came into existence. This was Agni, the deity of the cosmic Yajña or the seed through which all the divine powers became effective in creation. This is a kind of *Agni-saṁbharana* or the collecting of the minute particles of Agni round the centre which becomes visible as the primeval Heat (*Agraja Tapas*, *Abhīdha Tapas*, देवौष्ण्य). The process by which the virile power of the two parents is refined in their bodies is not different from what happened in the beginning of the creative act, i.e. the seed or *Ghṛita* was churned from the milk of the cosmic cow called Virāj as has been pointed out earlier. Conversion of water into milk is the symbol of motherhood. In the beginning existed an ocean of water or Soma which later on became an ocean of milk as soon as the principle of Hiraṇyagarbha or Nārāyaṇa incarnated within it. This is the meaning of the Purāṇic legend of Nārāyaṇa-Viṣṇu abiding in an ocean of milk for the sake of releasing his power into creativity. In milk the globules of butter exist

in minutest form and may be counted in millions and billions which by churning become solidified as butter. The same imagery is invoked in the present Mantra. It should not be forgotten that the cow or the mother fulfils her purpose only when it is sired by the male principle. With germinal fertilization only the mother becomes fertile otherwise she is futile. The birth of the son in the mother's womb is the result of the germinal cell that enters into the womb by mating with the father. This type of physical creation is the object of mantra 8.

The biological Person is a *Paśu*. In the *Agnichayana* ceremony or building of the fire-altar this is symbolised as *Paśavyā chiti* The animals described here are of three classes, viz. of the air, forest and village. This is not to be taken literally since evidently other classes of animals like those living in water have been omitted. It is a symbolical reference to the three types of prāṇic energy which enters into the constitution of each animal form. The symbolism is not difficult to understand, e.g. the *grāmya paśus* stand for the five material elements which live and move together in a herd. The animals of the air refer to the principle of Vital Air (*Prāṇa*), and the animals of the forest which roam free at will refer to the principle of Mind. Obviously, each living being is the composite form of mind, life and matter.

In Mantra 9 there is a reference to the creation of the principle of Veda, viz. the thought of the Creator as expressed in Ṛik, Yajus and Sāma, the three Vedas, as well as the metres (*Chhandāṁsi*) of the Atharva Veda. The first three Vedas symbolise the principle of the three Fires and the fourth of Soma.

After describing the two-fold Sarvahut Yajña of the Creator on the plane of mind and matter, the Ṛishi reverts to the five-fold sacrificial animals, namely *Purusha*, *Aśva*, *Gauḥ* and *Ajāvayaḥ*. These five typify the fivefold Prāṇic vibrations; for example, the animal with teeth on both sides is Purusha in whom all the different forms of motion are perfectly balanced against the substratum of rest. The horse is the dominant symbol of movement leading away from the centre. It is the animal dear to Indra. The cow is the symbol of the force coming from outside to the centre i.e. the centripetal or introvert movement. The horse symbolises Agni and Indra, the cow is the symbol of Soma and Vishṇu.

PAÑCHA-PAŚUS—The five animals in this list are all types of movements. The Purusha of the synthesis of the five motions, the horse of centrifugal motion, the cow of centripetal motion, the sheep of slow motion and the goat of accelerated motion. This is one kind of classification of the animals; another one has just been referred to in Mantra 8. The third classification

is that of the bipeds and quadrupeds in which the former symbolise the basic duality of creation and the latter its fourfold division into *ekpād* and *Tripād*.

FOURFOLD SOCIAL TYPES—Mantras 11 and 12 refer to the division of the Purusha into a fourfold pattern of manifestation as Brāhmaṇa, Rājanya, Vaiśya and Śūdra, or which is the same as head, arms, thighs and feet. This is a functional scheme essentially integrated and without referring to any social privileges as is often assumed. The spiritual power (*Brahma*) and the temporal power (*Kshatra*) represent the dual type of the functioning force as present in every centre of consciousness. From them emanate the sensory and motor organs, or the legislative and executive orders of the state. It may be mentioned that the diversified arrangement of the Purusha offered in the sacrifice is referred to by such terms as *Vyadadhuḥ*, *Vyakalpayana*, *Vitishṭhe*, *Vishṭhitam*, where the idea invariably is that of the one becoming the many under the stress of its creative potency.

THREE LOKAS—Mantras 13 and 14 refer to the well known conception of the Virāṭ form of Prajāpati which is frequently elaborated in the later Purāṇic literature. The beginnings of that conception are formulated here (*tathā lokān akalpayan*). Here two different groupings may be detected, the one based on the threefold division of Pṛithivī, Antariksha and

Dyauḥ, viz. the three *Lokas* which typify one of the most patent triads of Vedic symbolism. Space and time are the twofold extensions of the creative act and each is symbolised as a triad. As a matter of fact the single original centre of all the forces converts itself into a tricentric form, i.e. the one *Nābhi* becomes *Trināhhi*. This is represented in the Purusha as the Head, Navel and Feet.

PAÑCHA PRĀṆAS—The other basis of division has reference to the five Prāṇas which in the Vedas and the Upanishads are reckoned as *Manas*, *Śrotra*, *Prāṇa*, *Chakshus* and *Vāk*. These are the several organ (*indriyas*) of Indra or central vital consciousness. *Manas* or mind refers to the *Avyaya Purusha*, which is virtually its quintessence and *Śrotra* is its surplus from or refuse (*pravargya*). The creative process is a kind of *tapas* or heating in which the refined portion is conceived of as the mind or consciousness and its refuge or dross as space or the directions. Similarly, the *Akshara Purusha* is subjected to *Tapas* and creates out of himself the twin principles of *Prāṇa* and *Chakshus*. Finally the *Kshara Purusha* creates the principle of *Vāk* only referred to here as the mouth. *Vāk* is gross matter there being no subtle refinement of it. Each of these is associated with one single Deva, but the mouth with two Devas Indra and Agni. The mouth is the symbol of *Vāk* or matter, the five gross elements. Although one it is conceived of as

the composite form of the immortal and the mortal, former as the Indra and the latter as Agni. The one mouth is functionally completed by the two jaws (*nānā hanū vibhṛite saṁ bharete*, RV.X.79.1). Thus, these two mantras introduce us to the threefold and fivefold manifestations of the undifferentiated transcendent Reality. The cosmic Yajña is described both in terms of triplication (*trivṛit karaṇa*) and quintiplication (*pañchīkaraṇa*, RV. X. 124. 1, *Imam no agna upa yajñam ehi pañcha-yāmaṁ trivṛitaṁ saptatantum*). The one absolute Purusha becomes three for the sake of manifest creation as Aja (Avyaya), Akshara and Kshara, i.e. mind, life and matter (*Manas-Prāṇa-Vāk*). Each of these three develops a fivefold course (*pañcha-yāma*), so that the Avyaya Purusha or mind develops the five sheaths (*pañchakoshas*). The Akshara Purusha develops the *pañcha prāṇas* and the Kshara Purusha evolves the five gross elements of matter. In this way the one Purusha becomes the *Shoḍashī Purusha*, that is to say *Nabhya* Indra becomes *Shoḍashī* Indra. That is how Prajāpati which was *anirukta* and *amūrta* becomes *nirukta* and *mūrta*, i. e. the formless and unmanifest becomes formed and manifested; or the Hiraṇyagarbha assumes its greatness (*mahimā*) and extends up to the region of *Nāka* or heaven.

PURUSHA PAŚU—The transcendent Purusha who is mentioned as thousand-headed is the same as Yajña. All the other gods represent his immortal and mortal

powers and they organise the cosmic Yajña in which the Transcendent is sacrificed as an offering (*Devā yad yajñaṁ tanvānā*). What happens is that they create a *Purusha paśu*, i.e. the transcendent Purusha becomes immanent in matter, the immortal becomes manifest as mortal. This is known as *Purusha paśu*. Each animal form is material on the one hand but is an emblem of the immortal on the other. The divine becomes concreatised in a material body and this conception is referred to as the composite form of *Purusha* and *Paśu*. Each *Purusha-Paśu* is fastened or bound to a centre referred to as the Stake (*Yūpa*), Pillar (*Skambha*), Vanaspati, the *Axis Mundi*, the fulcrum of the cosmos which is its *Brahmasūtra*. This is also known as the *Vāṇa* or *Udumbara*. In the Brahma Purāṇa where an elaborate explanation of the Purusha sūkta is embodied (Ch. 161), General Time (*Nitya-Kāla*) is said to be the Stable Pillar to which Nārāyaṇa Vishṇu suffers himself to be tied as the sacrificial animal.

VEDI AND PARIDHI—The altar of the cosmic Yajña is as vast as the earth, where Pṛithivī symbolises the creative principle of motherhood that measures out the Yajña. Its sevenfold sheaths (*saptāparidhayaḥ*) are the principles of mind, life and the five elements of matter. The *paridhis* represent the principle of envelopment which is essential to create a container for the mighty principle of Life so long as it

abides in matter. The conception of the six directions of space and of the triple *lokas* is related to that of the *paridhis* (AB. 528, *Diśaḥ Paridhayaḥ* ; *Ime vai lokāḥ paridhayaḥ*, TB. 3. 8. 814). The number seven is significant and brings in the various Heptads familiar in Vedic thought. The Ṛigveda refers also to the seven directions of space (RV. IV. 13. 3), and also to *Saptadhāma*, Seven Stations ( RV. I. 22.16 ), of which the lowest is Pṛithivī or *Bhūḥ* and the highest is *Satyam* (also RV. X. 122. 3). We also find a reference to the seven boundaries (*Sapta Maryādaḥ*) (RV. X. 55). The number thrice-seven (*Tri Sapta*, RV. IX. 86.21) is also symbolical, the former referring to the seven-fold *Suparṇa-chiti* and the latter to the three-fold Purusha. The life in the Person is conceived of as the *Gāyatra* Chant and it is said to complete course in its three fuel-sticks (*Gāyatrasya samidhas tisra āhuḥ*, RV. 1164. 25). The number seven refers to manifestation on the plane of matter and three to that on the plane of Prāṇa, or the lower and the higher Prakṛitis respectively. Both are integrated, so that the Purusha Yajña envisaged in this sūkta may be possible. The human body or the living organism is the object of the symbolical enunciations.

The last mantra refers to the primeval ordinances (*Prathama Dharma*) by which creation takes place at two levels both being styled as Yajñas. The one is the *Sarvahut Yajña* of ideas and the other of

form, the one of *Prāṇa* and the other of *Bhūta*, the one of the *Devas* and the other of the *Prajās*, the one *Amūrta* and the other *Mūrta*, etc. . Human life is the composite result of the co-existence of these two principles.

NĀKA—The mid-point of consciousness separating the one from the other is termed *Nāka* and the three *Lokas* are the *Mahimānaḥ* or majesties of the three Gods—Agni, Vāyu and Āditya, which extend from earth to heaven. On the ridge of heaven or *Nāka* is the linking point of consciousness or *Prāṇa* which remains in contact on the other side with the transcendent, and at the same time feeds the material manifestation in the three Lokas on the lower side of Sūrya. The archetypal powers (*Sādhya Devāḥ*) have their abode at the point which separates the transcendent from the immanent.

The *Bhāgavata* rightly connects the Hiraṇyagarbha doctrine with that of the Virāṭ-Purusha. The primeval Egg with its inherent possibilities of manifesting Mind (*Vaikārika* or *Jñāna-śakti*), *Prāṇa* (*Taijasa* or *Kriyā śakti*) and Matter (*Tamas* or *Dravya-śakti*), floated for a thousand years in the Infinite Ocean, and then the Universal Virāṭ-Purusha was born from it. The cosmos is like a span (*vitasti*) in comparison to the Purusha who creates all that was in the past and will ever be in future. It is Purusha who heats the Virāj both from inside and from outside and the cosmic egg

is born out of it. The whole universe exists in God Nārāyaṇa (*Nārāyaṇe Bhagavati tadidam viśvam āhitam Bhāgavata*, 2. 6. 30). Nārāyaṇa takes the form of the three Vedas, three Metres and three Devas. *Ab intra* he was free from all attributes, but *ab extra* he became possessed with three qualities essential for manifestation. He is the lord of all the Prajāpatis or creative Divine powers. He is the lord of *Amṛita* and transcends that which is *martya* in the form of *Anna* or the worlds which are the food of the God of Death.

The Brahma Purāṇa (chapter 161) also offers a commentary on the Purusha Sūkta. Brahmā in the beginning of creation did not know what to do; then he heard the Divine speech persuading him to perform a Yajña which is the best form of Vishṇu (*Yajño vai Vishṇur ityeshā śrutir Brahman sanātanī, Brahma Purāṇa*, 161.15). As soon as Brahmā heard this the entire meaning of the Vedas dawned on him and after turning half of himself as female he collected the parapharnalia of Yajña, including, butter, fire-sticks, oblations, strew, metres, utensils, etc. Eternal Time became the Pillar in the sacrifice (*Yūpa*) and the three Guṇas became the ropes to fasten the animal (161.38), but there was no animal. Again the heavenly voice was heard asking Brahmā to invoke the Supreme Divine Lord. Brahmā did so by means of the Purusha-sūkta and realising the Thousand-headed Purusha, his own Father and Creator who was already fastened to the

Time-Stake by the power of the Three Guṇas, made a sacrifice of that Purusha and then the whole creation was born. The world with all its forms is *Yajña-deva* himself. The place where this primal sacrifice took place is said to be the famous holy centre named Kuśatarpaṇa tīrtha where the river Praṇahitā mingles its waters with Gautamī or Godāvarī (*Brahma Purāṇa*, ch. 161).

The above is a version of the cosmic sacrifice of Nārāyaṇa Purusha to suit a Puranic audience. A significant statement is the identification of the sacrificial pillar with absolute time (*Nitya-Kāla*). In the Purusha Sūkta itself it is tacitly referred to as the revolving wheel of Saṁvatasara comprised of the There Seasons—Spring, Summer and Autumn. In the making of this world a twofold process is simultaneously visible, namely, the movement of time and how time deals with matter. The former is symbolised as *Kāla-chakra* (*Kālātmaka Yajña*) and the latter as *Bhava-chakra* or *Brahma-chakra* (*Dravyātmaka Yajña*). Both are essential for creation as the glory and power of Nārāyaṇa Purusha.

# पुरुषसूक्त—ऋग्वेद १०।९०

## १—१६ नारायणः। पुरुषः। अनुष्टुप्, १६ त्रिष्टुप्।

सहस्रशीर्षा पुरुषः सहस्राक्षः सहस्रपात्।
स भूमिं विश्वतो वृत्वात्यतिष्ठद्दशाङ्गुलम्॥ १॥

पुरुष एवेदं सर्वं यद्भूतं यच्च भव्यम्।
उतामृतत्वस्येशानो यदन्नेनातिरोहति॥ २॥

एतावानस्य महिमातो ज्यायाँश्च पूरुषः।
पादोऽस्य विश्वा भूतानि त्रिपादस्यामृतं दिवि॥ ३॥

त्रिपादूर्ध्व उदैत्पुरुषः पादोऽस्येहाभवत्पुनः।
ततो विष्वङ् व्यक्रामत्साशनानशने अभि॥ ४॥

तस्माद्विराडजायत विराजो अधि पूरुषः।
स जातो अत्यरिच्यत पश्चाद्भूमिमथो पुरः॥ ५॥

यत्पुरुषेण हविषा देवा यज्ञमतन्वत।
वसन्तो अस्यासीदाज्यं ग्रीष्म इध्मः शरद्धविः॥ ६॥

तं यज्ञं बर्हिषि प्रौक्षन्पुरुषं जातमग्रतः।
तेन देवा अयजन्त साध्या ऋषयश्च ये॥ ७॥

तस्माद्यज्ञात्सर्वहुतः संभृतं पृषदाज्यम्।
पशूंस्ताँश्चक्रे वायव्यानारण्यान्ग्राम्याश्च ये॥ ८॥

तस्माद्यज्ञात्सर्वहुत ऋचः सामानि जज्ञिरे।
छन्दांसि जज्ञिरे तस्माद्यजुस्तस्मादजायत ॥ ९ ॥

तस्मादश्वा अजायन्त ये के चोभयादतः।
गावो ह जज्ञिरे तस्मात्तस्माज्जाता अजावयः ॥ १० ॥

यत्पुरुषं व्यदधुः कतिधा व्यकल्पयन्।
मुखं किमस्य कौ बाहू का ऊरू पादा उच्येते ॥ ११ ॥

ब्राह्मणोऽस्य मुखमासीद्बाहू राजन्यः कृतः।
ऊरू तदस्य यद्वैश्यः पद्भ्यां शूद्रो अजायत ॥ १२ ॥

चन्द्रमा मनसो जातश्चक्षोः सूर्यो अजायत।
मुखादिन्द्रश्चाग्निश्च प्राणाद्वायुरजायत ॥ १३ ॥

नाभ्या आसीदन्तरिक्षं शीर्ष्णो द्यौः समवर्तत।
पद्भ्यां भूमिर्दिशः श्रोत्रात्तथा लोकाँ अकल्पयन् ॥ १४ ॥

सप्तास्यासन्परिधयस्त्रिः सप्त समिधः कृताः।
देवा यद्यज्ञं तन्वाना अबन्धन्पुरुषं पशुम् ॥ १५ ॥

यज्ञेन यज्ञमयजन्त देवास्तानि धर्माणि प्रथमान्यासन्।
ते ह नाकं महिमानः सचन्त यत्र पूर्वे साध्याः सन्ति देवाः ॥१६॥

# Lecture XI

## NĀSADĪYA SŪKTA

## [ नासदीय सूक्त ]

ṚISHI OF THE SŪKTA—The Nāsadīya-sūkta is probably the most recondite statement of the metaphysical thought (*Bhāva-vṛittam*) of the Ṛishis employing a number of technical terms which later on were accepted as definitions in the codified systems of Indian philosophy. Its Ṛishi is Parameshṭhī Prajāpati who seems more to be the personification of an idea rather than a historical sage. Prajāpati in the transcendent form is conceived of as Svayambhū and as Parameshṭhī. Svayambhū or the Self-existent stands for the Absolute who is beyond all predication and above the two-fold categories as envisaged in the first two mantras, viz, beyond immortality and death, light and darkness, Prāṇa and Vāyu, Sat and Asat, Para and Apara, etc. Svayambhū as the Father-principle is the latent source of the manifested cosmos. As a pair to him is Prajāpati Parameshṭhī, representing the Mother principle of the manifested world, the plane of the basic duality, essential for the birth of the universe. Rightly therefore Parameshṭhī or the Universal is spoken of as the Seer responsible for the cosmogonic formulation in the hymn.

WORK OF PANDIT OJHA—This hymn contains refereace to a number of doctrines which served as nucleus for the gathering thoughts of the Ṛishis when poetic statements of Sṛishṭi-Vidyā were being attempted in a rich variety of bold linguistic forms. According to Pandit Madhusudan Ojha of Jaipur who was the one scholar to devote adequate attention to this hymn the first two mantras refer to ten different points of view, each of which occurs in different places in the Saṁhitās and the Brāhmaṇas. In his book '*Daśavāda-Rahasya*' he has carried out a discussion of these doctrines and I feel indebted to him for light on this sūkta. I have taken his comments and added much material of my own. The following is an exposition of the doctrines under reference.

## Mantra I

1. SADASAD-VĀDA—According to this view the cosmos is *Sat* and its preceding cause *Asat*. In Ṛigveda 10.72 the period of cosmic time is said to be two-fold, viz. the life of Devas in a preceding age (*Pūrvya-yuga*) and a subsequent age (*Uttara-yuga*) the formsr known as *Asat* and the latter as *Sat*. The two stand in a related priority and the *Asat* is said to be kin of *Sat* (*Sato bandhum asati niravindan*, RV.X.129.4). Elsewhere in the Ṛigveda both Asat and Sat are said to have existed in the highest Empyrean which was the abode of God and from which Aditi (Universal

Nature) and her son Daksha (presiding genius of cosmic Yajña) were born—

असच्च सच्च परमे व्योमन् दक्षस्य जनमन्नदितेरुपस्थे।
अग्निर्ह नः प्रथमजा ऋतस्य पूर्वं आयुनि वृषभश्च धेनुः॥
(RV. X. 5. 7)

The clearest interpretation is found in the Śatapatha where Ast is explained as the *Rishi*-creation, which is further explained as *Prāṇa-sṛishṭi* i.e. the principle of conciousness which was the primeval essence in the beginning of the cosmos :—

असद्वा इदमग्र आसीत्। तदाहुः किं तदसदासीदिति। ऋषयो वाव ते अग्रे असदासीत्। तदाहुः के ते ऋषय इति। प्राणा वा ऋषयः। (ŚB. 6.1.1.1.)

The gross material creation is said to be Sat and the preceding stage of Prāṇa or energy is termed Asat. It would be valid to speak of Brahman as Asat and Pradhāna or Prakṛiti as Sat. The Seer negates here the predication of either Asat or Sat with reference to the preceding ontological entity which is Parātpara Svayambhū.

2. RAJO-VĀDA—It is said here that *Rajas*, the primeval material cause of the universe, also did not have existence in the latent source. The doctrine of *Rajas* is very much amplified in the Ṛigveda. Once it is said that all the Devas or the Prāṇic energies in creation were at rest in the beginning, i.e. sleeping in

the depth of the primeval ocean of energy. When the urge for creation was felt and the simmering waters of the Deep Sea were churned by a tectonic world-creating movement, the Devas or the Giant-Powers of creativity sprang to their feet and began their cosmic dance. This filled the whole space with particles of agitated dust (*Tīvra-reṇu*, X. 72. 6) Their leader was Indra, the great dancer (*Nṛitu*, VIII. 24. 12), Natarāja of later mythology who performs the cosmic *tāṇḍava*. Each universe is a particle of dust or a grain of sand filling the infinite ocean which is the source of creation.

We meet with another conception of *Rajas* in the Ṛigveda. It is said that *Rajas* is the power of black and white colour, the former is *kṛishṇa rajas*, i.e. latent power existing in the source and the latter is *śukla rajas*, the manifest power. The two are balancing each other, moving hand in hand, which we see in the form of Night and Day or as Darkness and Light revolving in a circle as the dynamic pulsating forces of creation—

अह्श्च कृष्णमहरर्जुनं च विवर्तेते रजसी वेद्याभिः ।
वैश्वानरो जायमानो न राजावातिरज्ज्योषाग्निस्तमांसि ॥
(RV. VI. 9. 1)

The cosmic Fire or energy which has created the Sun and the Vaiśvānara in the individual centre depend for effective activity on the emergence of this two-fold *Rajas* as the basal dichotomy of the cosmos. They

are spoken of as the Pair of Twin Beauties, viz. the dark and white sisters in whose hands the mighty power of all the gods lies secure—

नाना चक्राते यम्या वपूंषि तयोरन्यद्रोचते कृष्णमन्यत्।
श्यावी च यदरुषी च स्वसारौ महद्देवानामसुरत्वमेकम् ॥
(RV. III. 55 111)

Vedic Rajas should be understood as typifying the principle of Motion (*Gati*) as against the principle of Rest (*Sthiti*). Rest is equivalent to *Aja*, the Unborn and Rajas the born principle or created cosmos. The former corresponds to Avyaya Purusha and the latter to Akshara Purusha, the former being the support of the latter—

वि यस्तस्तम्भ षळिमा रजांस्यजस्य रूपे किमपि स्विदेकम्।
(RV. I. 164. 6).

The six-fold *Rajas* referred to here is the same as 'Six Expansive Ones' (षळुर्वीरेकमिद्बृहत्, RV. X. 14. 16; देवीः षळुर्वीरुरु, X.128.5). This is a reference to the six Space or to the Lokas, viz. Bhūḥ, Bhuvaḥ, Svaḥ, directions of Mahaḥ, Janaḥ, Tapaḥ, with Satyam as the seventh corresponding to *Aja*, the unborn Prajāpati.

3. VYOMA-VĀDA—This is a reference to the doctrine of *Vyoma* equivalent to *Ākāśa* or Space as the ultimate substratum of all things which later on became a major plank in the philosophy of the Upanisads. All the creatures have their being in *Ākāśa*. They emanate

from *Ākāśa* and find their ultimate rest in *Akaśā*. The RV. also makes frequent mention of *Parama Vyoma* as the source of all manifest Devas and Vāk. That highest *Ākāśa* is immortal and the source of material space (*Bhūtākāśa*). The thousand-syllablled speech (*Sahasrāksharā Vāk*, RV. I. 164. 41) belongs to the level of Parama-Vyoma whereas the speech uttered as sound is mortal and belongs to the sphere of differentiated *Ākāśa*. We all know that Śabda or speech is the attribute of *Ākāśa* and both exist on two relative planes, viz. immortal and mortal, i.e. Divine and Material—*Amṛita-Ākāśa* and *Martya-Ākāśa*, *Amṛitā-Vāk* and *Martyā Vāk*, *Param-Vyoma* and *Vyoma*.

4. PARĀVARA-VĀDA—It has reference to the relative conception of *Para* and *Apara*, Absolute and Relative, Transcendent and Immanent, Higher and Lower, Ūrdhva and Adhaḥ, Eka and Bahudhā etc. This is a basic conception essential for manifestation. The doctrine is elaborated in Asyavāmīya Sūkta (RV. I. 164. 17-19). There are two categories *Parārdha* and *Avarārdha*, also *Parastāt* and *Avastāt*, *Parāk* and *Arvāk*. Indra symbolizes the former and Soma the latter ; both are moving as an inseparable pair under a common mutual stress called *Rajas* or movement

इन्द्रश्च या चक्रथुः सोम तानि धुरा न युक्ता रजसो वहन्ति ।
(RV. I. 164. 19).

5. ĀVARAṆA-VĀDA—In the second line of mantra 1 an important question is asked which has a

material bearing on the basic principles of creation. It is the question about the measure of the cosmos which determines the size or the container of the object to be made. What was the covering, where was it and what gave shelter ? These have reference to the principle of *Pramā* referred to in Ṛigveda (*Kāsīt pramā pratimā*, RV. X. 130.3). For any thing to be created two factors are essential to be determined, viz. size and model. The principle of size determines the centre (*Nābhi*), the diameter and the circumference (*Maṇḍala*). Whatever is created or made is subject to measurement. The cosmos is frequently spoken of as a measuring out, a planned activity on the part of its Creator. It is *Vimāna*, from the root *Mā* to measure. This is here referred to as *Āvaraṇa* and *Śarman*, the latter also meaning shelter or protection. *Śarma* is identified in the Brāhmaṇa literature as *Charma* ( शर्म चर्म वा एतत्कृष्णस्य मृगस्यतन्मानुषं शर्म देवत्रा, ŚB. III. 2.1.8), i. e. esoterically speaking *Śarma* is the same as *Charma*. On the plane of Matter we refer to it as *Charma* or skin which covers and shelters the organism and each of its constituent limbs and also every cell ; the same is known, as *Śarma* on the plane of the working of Prāṇa or Devas. There would be no Yajña without this principle of *Śarma* or divine influence and energy becoming operative inside the measured field where that force or power asserts itself. It is stated in the Purāṇas that God *Śiva* put on an elephant skin

(*Gaja-charma*) in the beginning of his cosmic dance. Here the Elephant is the symbol of *Ahaṅkāra*, the Ego which emerges in the womb of the Universal as the centre of individual envelopment. The size of the Universe is a big question in modern science, and so the question of *Virāṭ* in its spatial and temporal extensions engaged the attention of ancient thinkers and they have striven to formulate their answers in words, but speech, howsoever articulate, falls short of precise definition when it has to grapple with the transcendent categories of Svayambhū Purusha and Virāj Purusha. The Mother-principle is truly the mould or shelter of all created forms and her womb (*Yoni*) is the measure of the manifested forms. The Earth is the symbol of the Mother and it is conceived of as the great receptcle or container (*bhūmir āvapanaṁ mahat*, VS. 23.10). Anything and everything in material manifestation has its Mother. The earth before us of whatever size is the symbol of motherhood and each star including the sun has its mother so that ultimately the whole cosmos existed in the womb of its mother, symbolically thought of as Night (*jagato niveśanī*, RV. I. 35.1), Darkness or the Great Goddess (*Mahā Devī, Mahā Rātri, Mahā Māyā*).

6. AMBHO-VĀDA :—This was also the basic creed of Vedic poets to think of the cosmic source or mother in terms of the unfathomed waters which are referred to variously as *Āpaḥ, Salilam, Samudra, Soma,*

*Ṛita, Arṇava,* etc. in the Ṛigveda. Those waters as the primeval ocean or the divine mother concealed in their womb millions and billions of fiery sparks which have now become visible to us as so many Suns. The process of creation on the plane of the Universal is continuous going on without stopping and should not be thought of as a historical event in time. Whatever happened in creation in the beginning is happening also today. The horoscope of the cosmos is unfolding incessantly and the powerful strides of Time are moving in endless circles. The infinite ocean as the source was wrapped in stillness but got agitated somewhere and by someone into culvunsions which do not seem to stop anywhere. This has been graphically conceived as a mightly dance movement of the Gods or of the Yatis, i. e. a two-fold movement implying a pull towards the centre (*Pravṛitti*) and a corresponding movement turning away from the centre (*Nivṛitti*). Both are essential for the dance, viz. the stable axis and the moving felly. The Deva stands for Yajña, order, system or stability, whereas the Yati or Muni for the opposite principle of erratic motion. They coexist and are essential for creation

मुनिर्देवस्यदेवस्य सौकृत्याय सखा हितः,

(RV. X. 136.4).

Each Deva is the form of Agni and Agni is the son of Waters (*Apāṁ napāt*). The Gods discovered

beautiful Agni hidden in the waters under the care of the seven sisters (RV. III. 1. 3, अविन्दन्तु दर्शतमप्स्वन्तर्देवासो अग्निमपसि स्वसॄणाम्). The first to be born from the ocean of Ṛita was Agni or Sūrya or Indra which is the symbol of the cosmic rhythm expressed as creation and dissolution.

## Mantra II

7. AMṚITA-MṚITYU-VĀDA :—Mantra 2 refers to the doctrine of immortality and death, the former is the Deva and the latter is Bhūta ; the one is energy and the other matter, the one is divine and the other human, the one is beyond time and space and the other conditioned by time-space relata, the one stands for the principle of rest and the other for motion. In this way the two principles have diverse connotations and stand out as a coherent formula so intrinsically inseparable from each other that the Śatpatha Brāhmaṇa speaks of *Amṛita* existing within *Mṛityu* and of *Mṛityu* within *Amṛita* (ŚB. X. 5.2.4). In creation both coexist. It is said that Aditi, the mother of Gods, gave birth to eight sons, seven of whom were the Āditya Immortals and the eighth was Sūrya. Aditi coaxed the first batch to create but with immortality alone as their possession they did not succeed. Then she turned to Mārtaṇḍa or Sūrya who combines in himself both *Amṛita* and *Mṛityu*, Life and Death, Energy and Matter and he was able to bring Life to the level of Matter. In the eyes of the Ṛishis Sūrya is the sign

of demarcation between immortality and death, that which is on this side of the Sun is in the grip of death or time and that which is beyond is in the lap of Amṛita—

स एष मृत्युस्तद्यत्किंचावाचीनमादित्यात्सर्वं तन्मृत्युनाप्तम्
अथ य एनमत ऊर्ध्वं चिनुते स पुनर्मृत्युमपजयति

(ŚB. 10.5.1.4)

8. AHORĀTRA-VĀDA—This was another name of the Kāla doctrine, i.e. Time as the supreme cause of the worlds manifested as a rhythm which is visible in the smaller and greater units of time. For example, Ahorātra, the two-halves of the month, the seasons, the two semesters of the year, the *Manavantara* periods and the further astronomical measures of time—at every point there is a rhythm in which time presses on time as the supreme impeller and no other extraneous force or power is needed to explain the recurrent phenomenon of cosmic manifestation (कालं कालेन पीडयन्, मनु). The advocates of this doctrine had a long history and their tenets were of the widest acceptance by the teachers of both the Vedic and materialist schools. The Atharva Veda gives a systematic account of the belief of the Kāla-Vāda metaphysics (AV. 19. 53. 14). All the created worlds are the chariot wheels of time. Time is a prolific horse who knows no decay and whose thousand eyes are turned to every space. He bears every one onward. Immortality is the axle of

the chariot which moves on seven rolling wheels. He is the primal Deity, Deva whom all invoke. He is Kāla, Full Vase overflowing with life. He is the son of the Self-existent Father ; there is no other power than he. Heaven and Earth were created by him and he stirred to motion what is and what will be. In Kāla all things have their being including Mind and Prāṇa. The highest Brahman is in Him ; the Fiery principle wherever we see it is the product of Kāla, who is the father of Prajāpati and the lord of all. He made this universe and stirred it to motion and on him it rests. He is the support of the universal principle known as Parameshṭhī, Kāla is self-made, whom we know as Kaśyapa Prajāpati, the on-looking creator. The sun ascends by Kāla, and in Kāla sinks again to rest. From Kāla sprang the twin principles of *Ṛik* and *Yajus*. In Kāla is the cosmic Yajña which is the eternal food for the gods. Both this world and the world that is lofty exist in Kāla. Kāla has conquered all the worlds and is supplicated by all as God Supreme.

The Night and Day unit (*Ahorātra*) is but a sample, an examplar of Mahā-Kāla which has taken form and all the mystery which exists in the source exists also in each fleeting moment of time. It is the great divine Horse of the Aśvamedha sacrifice. Time-Horse is being cut to pieces limb by limb but it does not decay or die. This intricate and lofty philosophical doctrine had many ramifications. For example, the conception

of Garutmā Suparṇa, the, metres, the Chakra both as Kāla-chakra and Brahma-chakra, Darśa-Paurṇamāsa sacrifices and Manvantaras were linked to the metaphysics of Kāla. The adepts in this knowledge were known as Ahorātra-vids. In Purāṇic imagery Kāla is symbolized as the Ṛishi Mārkaṇḍeya who has a life of a thousand year (*Sahasrāyu*). At the end of the period of dissolution when Lord Vishṇu starts afresh his chain of creativity, Mārkaṇḍeya is expelled out of the womb of Nārāyaṇa and witnesses the miracle of the eternal life principle incarnating as a child and floating on a leaf on the surface of the Infinite Ocean.

9. DEVA-VĀDA—In verse 6 there is a reference to the Gods (*Devāḥ*) and a hypothesis is suggested that the cosmos was created by the activity of Devas, but as the divine powers themselves were subsequents to the birth of cosmos it is doubtful whether its mystery is known even to them. The doctrine of the Devas is the most widely accepted one in the Ṛigveda as the root cause of the cosmos. The Devas stand for the divine principle at all levels, viz. Mind, Life and Matter and there is no doubt that the Ṛishis had a deep belief in the potency of differentiated Prāṇic energies conceived of as the Devas who have produced these worlds and living beings and are sustaining them. One could say that of all the points of view enunciated in the Ṛigveda the one about the Devas is the most comprehensive in which all others

become merged. Deva is literally the principle of light that shines in all times and places. The nature of that light is a vibration, a quivering, a process of contraction and expansion which bears the mystico-theological appellation of Prāṇa. It is stated that in the beginning one transcedent Asura of mighty Prāṇic principle presided over all the Gods (महद् देवानामसुरत्वमेकम्).

He was called Asura because in him was concealed the *Asu* or Prāṇa or the life germ which becomes mainifested as so many Devas or divine powers that are in heaven and on earth. It is argued that the Devas also do not know the mystery of creation since the thousand headed Purusha whom they offered as an oblation in the cosmic sacrifice existed prior to their birth.

10. BRAHMA-VĀDA—The whole burden of this Sūkta is to trace the creation to its source in a transcedent being who is here called *Adhyaksha* existing in the highest Empyrean (*Parme vyoman*, RV. X.129.7). The word Brahman has not been used in this sūkta but there is hardly any doubt that the same is suggested by an overwhelming force of symbolical words. He is referred to as Ekam in mantra 2 and that one is suggestively called Parātapara, the Asbolute beyond which nothing else existed (तस्माद्धान्यन्न परः किंचनासु, RV. X.129.2). The appropriate symbol for the transcendent reality is given as Ābhu, the all-encompassing

reality, which becomes modified in one of its portions as the cosmos. This later is called *tuchchhya*, a minute unit in comparison to the Ābhu that surrounds it.

The Nāsadīya Sūkta is a model of brevity and compact thought presenting the highest metaphysical doctrine in only three and a half mantras. In mantra 2 the transcendent reality called Ekam is said to be the nature of Prāṇa. In that it was breathing but there was no material breath to sustain that life (*Ānīd avātam*). How such a thing is possible no one knows nor can explain. The self existent creator lives in his own right and this power is referred to here as *Svadhā*. Its precise genesis is an unknown mystery. Some call it the Līlā or Krīdā of the Lord. The word Svadhā points to the self of the creator as a substance by which the creation is brought into being.

## Mantra III

TWO-FOLD TAMAS PRINCIPLES:—In mantra 3 there is a reference to the two principles of Tamas, the one higher and the other lower, the latter being enveloped in the womb of the former. It is an *Anugama* reference depending on the exigencies of interpretation. The idea is that the two parents of the cosmos, viz. Svayambhū and Parameśthī both were concealed in their source ; the first as an unmanifested and the second as formless manifestation. A

reference to the second one is found in the mantra itself, viz. *Salilam*, the Waters also called *Āpaḥ*, *Samudram*, or the mother principle in which creation (*Idaṃ sarvam*) was concealed as something mysterious and unknown (*Apraketam*). This was the mother principle or Parameśthī, the universal which is the latent source of the individual creation both on the level of the cosmos and in each living being. The mother with her womb creating the child is symbolised as Night (or Darkness) (*Tamas*.) The other higher and deeper *tamas* is the transcendent principle called Svayambhū, the self-existent Brahman symbolised as an unknown and unknowable factor like the absolute arithmetical point. It is referred to as *Anirukta*, *Amūrta* and Ka Prajāpati i.e. the father principle which creates his counterpart as his *Mahimā* or *Mahat*.

ĀBHU AND TUCHCHHY:—These two principles are referred to as *Ābhu* and *Tuchchhya*. The *Ābhu* is the same as the thousand headed Purusha (RV. X.90.1) and also the Purusha with heads, eyes, arms and feet on all sides.

विश्वतश्चक्षुरुत विश्वतोमुखो विश्वतो बाहुरुत विश्वतस्पात्

(RV. X. 81.3).

Such a being can only be a Prāṇa Purusha in which all the undifferentiated faculties exists at all points as soon as the individuated Purusha begins to be formed each limb is located separately. This is the difference

between the Avyakta and Vyakta, and between what is known in Śaiva Iconography as the Liṅga Vigraha and Purusha Vigraha, the former is merely a symbol of all the possibilities of existence whereas in the latter they take a definite form and shape.

The next important word which refers to creation is *tuchchhya* which signifies a dimensional form which is always termed as smaller or measured with respect to one which is beyond all measure. For example, the circumference evolved out of its centre is always to be deemed as inferior with respect to its source. The centre is Purusha and the circumference is its *Mahimā* (RV.X. 90.2), the former always taking precedence of the latter, the one being known as *Ūrdhva* and the other as *Iha* i.e. the non-directional particular point in a geometrical frame-work. It is the secret of Vedic doctrine that the absolute transcendent Brahman called *Ābhu* or *Ananta* becomes modified by his own creative self and that becomes the *Saṁsāra*.

How this creational bifercation takes place is mentioned in the last part of mantra 3. It is the power of Tapas which transforms the point into its greatness. Tapas elsewhere is known as the primeval Heat (*Agraja tapas*), *Devaushṇya*, the divine heat or an incalculable explosion of energy called *Abhīddha tapas* (RV. X. 190.1). The source, nature and effect of this Tapas which could have existed and functioned

as an infinite ocean of the waves of Prāṇa (*Samañchanaprasāraṇa*) or Light and Heat (*Jyoti and Ghraṁsa*) cannot be determined. What actually happens as a result of this activity is the creation of individual centres as whirl pools of energy which the Ṛishi here speaks of as Ekam. This one also was an unknown factor called Avyaya Purusha or Aja and *Kimapisvid* ( किमपिस्विद् ) something which is beyond comprehension. (RV. I. 1.64.6).

## Mantra IV

PRINCIPLE OF KĀMA :—Mantra 4 takes up the clue of the creative process after the one centre comes into being in the midst of the universal, it is known as the Mind, Manas or Consciousness with all its potentialities to begin to function as a centre. The basic quality of mind is Kāma. It was the first principle to come into existence as mentioned here by the words *Agre* and *Prathamam*. According to the Upanishads Manas is known variously as *Prajñāna, Saṁjñāna, Vijñāna, Saṅkalpa, Manīshā, Smṛiti, Kratu, Asu, Kāma, Hṛidaya* etc. and that Prajñāna is Brahma itself comprehending within its meaning and substance Brahma, Indra, Prajapati and all the Gods (*Aitareya Up.*, III. 2).

The word Kāma, literally desire, refers also to the basic faculty by which the one principle becomes split up into two as the two halves of a single Egg, or the two parent called Dvāyā-Pṛithivī, the father and

the mother principles, Agni and Soma, or the eternal man and the eternal woman. They are bound to each other by the most subtle principle of Love or Desire on the triple plane of Mind, Life and Matter. Kāma is the fecundating seed that germinates in the form of each living organism in the womb of the mother. It is a mysterious power which vitalises the whole consciousness. It is Nature's own technique to prepetuate life on the plane of manifestation. The life span as expressed in each cell is designed to prepare each organism for the consumation of the secret of Love. Kāma in this sense is a divine act symbolised in Vedic term as the marriage of heaven and earth or the sacrament which throws open the flood gate for the descent of immortal Prāṇa in mortal matter. The union of Deva and Bhūta is accomplished through Kāma which becomes manifested as the principle of the Mind.

KINSHIP OF ŚAT-MATTER WITH ASAT-PRĀṆA :— The second part of this mantra refers to the kinship between Sat and Asat. Sat here signifies the world of Matter and Asat the divine principle of Prāṇa or Life. The Śatapatha makes this definition clear that the principle of Prāṇa is termed in the esoteric languages of the Vedas as Asat (*Prāṇā vā ṛishayaḥ asat*, ŚB. 6.1.1.1). It is stated elsewhere that in the cosmic activity of the divine powers it is the Asat which

creates Sat, viz. the principle of Prāṇa or life or conciousness which creates matter,

देवानां पूर्व्ये युगे ऽसतो सदजायत।

RV. X. 72.2.

Although mind and matter are diametrically oppossed they are inseparable companions in each organic centre or the living body. It is to this dominant relationship that the mantra makes a specific reference. Both are *sabandhu* viz. kith and kin, which is the same as the doctrine of having a common womb (*Sayoni*). The living is the kin of the dead (matter) and the immortal has a common womb with the mortal,

जीवो मृतस्य चरति स्वधाभिरमर्त्यो मर्त्येना सयोनिः।

RV. I. 164.30.

Living consciousness as manifested in matter is the supreme mystery which is a burden of these mantras. The poets direct the power of their inspired mind to the unravelling of this top mystery. A union of mind with matter is a fact of which each one is a witness to one's ownself although no science or philosophy can explain how it has happened. The embroyonic development of the mind and the body and all the psychical, vital and physical functionings and powers of thought, emotions, feelings etc. are a miracle of which the secrets are unknown.

Mantra 5 is couched partly in the language of wonderment, cogitating on the obscure nature of the mystery, and partly trying to approach the problem in the manner of science, tackling with such a reality as *Retas* or the Seed and its assuming a majesty *Mahimā* by systematic germination and growth. The reference to *Raśmi*, a ray of light is quite happy in the context of Vedic symbolism where the supreme divine reality is conceived of as Brahman or the Supernal Sun with a thousand rays of which a single ray is reflected in each living centre. If we look at the word of the mantra with deeper insight the question arises as to what is the ray, why it is said to be coming from the oblique side and who are the divinities that claim this spark to be their own. The answers to these three questions are significant in this context. The ray of light is Prāṇa, its source is the immortal divine consciousness or Vijñāna which is the same as Sūrya, the symbol of Brahman. The deities which cluster round this Ray are those known as the Light-sipping Devas, *Marīchipa Deva* (VS. VII. 3). All the powers that are in heaven and on the earth, i.e. in the immortal divine source and in mortal matter are present in the single prāṇic radiant principle called Life. Although it is one and indivisible still it is differentiated within the living organism as so many different Devas or prāṇic centres each sipping its own light or radiant energy. There is not a single cell of matter where the radiant Deva principle called Prāṇa does

not incarnate. This radiant spark of light is said to spread in an oblique direction (*Tiraśchīna*), which implies that it creates its *maṇḍala* or *mahimā* with itself as the source or centre (cf. VS. 32. 2, *Ūrdhva*, *Adhaḥ*, and *Tiryak*). The four normal and the four intermediate directions form the sphere which the Prāṇa as Light-ray pervades (cf. *sa sadhrīchīḥ sa vishūchīr vasānaḥ*, RV. I. 164. 31). Those who see it are left wondering–'whether it has come from below', 'whether it has come from above'. The words *Adhaḥ* and *Upari* are relative and symbolical, the former refers to the manifested form in matter and the latter to the unmanifested source in the divine transcendent reality. The former is *Eka-pāda*, *Adhaḥ Iha*; the latter is *Tripād*, *Ūrdhva*, *Upari*. Both remind us of a rich terminology familiar in many mantras and different formulations.

The Ṛishi then refers to two kinds of Devas, firstly those who are inherent in the seed or germinal state and wherever the seed is deposited the Devas or divine powers are incipient in it, forming its invisible or potential centre. The second class of Devas are called *Mahimānaḥ*, i.e. those manifesting as the greatness or majesty of the centre in the form of the circumference. *Mahimā* is the same as *Maṇḍala* which refers to the totality of the manifested powers which had their latent existence in the invisible source. Thus all manifestation is an interplay of

these two aspects of the single creative act constituted as the seed and the organism. The one is hidden (*parokṣha*), the other is visible (*pratyakṣha*); the one is Prāṇa (Energy) the other is Bhūta (Matter). These may be imagined as the two wheels of the car of Indra, i.e. the central vital Prāṇa (*Madhya Prāṇa*, ŚB. VI. 1. 1.) who is present as each living organism.

The same imagery is extended in the fourth part of the mantra under the symbolical term *Svadhā* and *Prayati*. *Prayati* is *Prāṇa*, the regulating centre which is the same as the seed, or in other terms *Sthiti* or *Pratishṭhā*. We are reminded here of the explanation given to the letter *Ya* of Hṛidaya, i.e. *Yamayati*, that which governs and controls the manifest form, itself acting as the centre. The other principle is called *Svadhā* which is responsible for creating the Pitṛis. The Pitṛis are the Father-Mother principle operative behind each manifest form. *Svadhā* corresponds to *Mahimā* and *Prayati* to *Retodhā*, the two pairs typifying an appropriate terminology of the divine formless reality and the material forms or corporeal modality on the plane of matter. As explained earlier the one is Sat and the other Asat and both exist as an essential pair. The doctrine of the two co-existing is formulated as *Para* and *Avara*, Prayati or the source being *Parastāt* and Svadhā or the manifest form being *Avastāt*.

The last two mantras are couched in the language typical to Vedic scepticism throwing open the flood-

gates of doubt and bold enquiry knowing no bound :

Who verily knows and who can declare it ?
Whence it was born and whence comes this creation ?
The Gods are later than the world production.
Who knows then whence it first came into being ?
He, the first origin of this creation, whether he formed
it all or did not form it,
Whose eye controls this world in highest heaven,
He verily knows it, or perhaps he knows not.

Such a confession of ignorance should have been rooted in deep knowledge. In the worlds of Maurice Mæterlink : 'Is it possible to find in our human annals, words more majestic, more full of solemn anguish, more august in tone, more devout, more terrible ? Where could we find at the very foundation of life a completer and more irreduciable confession of ignorance ? Where, from the depths of our agonsticism, which thousands of years have augmented, can we point to a wider horizon ? At the very outset it passes all that has been said, and goes farther than we shall ever dare to go, lest we fall into despair, for it does not fear to ask itself whether the Supreme Being knows what He has done—knows whether He is or is not the Creator, and questions whether He has become conscious of Himself.'

No doubt the Nāsadīya Sūkta touches the highest point in the philosophy of India. It is the most im-

portant contribution of the Ṛigveda to Indian metaphysics, as observed by Keith writing about this hymn of creation :

The poem commences with an assertion : in the beginning there was neither being nor not-being : there was no atmosphere nor sky: the question is asked what covering there was, and was there a fathomless abyss of waters. There was neither death nor immortality, nor night nor day. There was nothing else in the world save the one which breathed, but without wind, of its own power. There was, however, darkness, and a moving ocean without light: through the might of fervour, Tapas, was born a living force enveloped in a shell. Then there developed desire, Kāma, the first seed of mind: the sages found the root of not-being, searching for it in the heart. Thus far the first four verses: the fifth is a puzzle: it may be referred to the sages who drove a division through the universe and distinguished the upper and the lower, the world of nature above, the principle of nature below: but this version is wholly problematical. The next two verses end with a deep expression of doubt : the gods are later than the creation and cannot know of its origin: whether the creation was made by itself or not, the overseer of it in the highest space of heaven he knows of it, or perhaps he knows not.

The hymn is clearly difficult to understand: the part of the seers, which appears merely as a statement

of what their reflections have arrived at, is even understood by Bloomfield to be a cosmical action, indicating that they took part in the creation of the universe. This seems, however, unnatural and strained, but not more so than the interpretation of verse 5 adopted by Deussen, which would make it into an assertion that the sages were able to discriminate between the thing in itself and the phenomenal world, between natura naturans and natura naturate. What is clear is that there is conceived as first existing one thing, which is described as breathing without wind, an effort to express a primitive nature different in essence from anything known to the priest, conceived perhaps metaphorically only as a dark ocean or chaos. In this through Tapas, which here must rather be cosmic than refer to the activity of seers or other human powers, by inward fervour, springs up the being enveloped in a shell, which in the later conception is the golden world egg. The next step in development is the appearance of desire, unless that it is to be taken as born of mind, when it is described as the first seed of mind. If so, the mind must be deemed to be an attribute of the one which develops in the shell, whence springs desire: in the alternative the phrase may be taken as the source which produces mind, and desire, unconscious will, may be held to produce conscious will or mind. The latter view,

however, is unnatural in point of language and has the additional disadvantage that in the Taittirīya Āraṇyaka we already find that mind is given as prior to desire in a passage which is based on the hymn. Nor can we hold—and this is much more important—that Kāma was conceived as unconscious will: it is rather the natural expression for conscious desire, which would rise from the existence of mind as a substratum. The later philosophy makes the knowledge of desires depend on the existence of mind, and this idea may be foreshadowed here, where mind is made a cosmic *prius* of desire. Beyond this the poet does not go: he ends with the suggestion of a supreme deity as distinct from the gods who are created, and ends with a doubt whether such a deity has power of knowledge, that is, whether it has consciousness at all. We cannot, therefore, really say whether or not the first cause of the world is deemed a conscious entity at all: the assertion that it was not the first cause of the world is not not-being, which is in words a little inconsistent with the assertion that the sages found the root of being in not-being, searching in the heart, is in effect an assertion that it was a peculiar sort of being, different from ordinary being. The reference to the heart, however, as the place of search reminds us that the heart even in the Rigveda seems the abode of mind, and suggests that in the ultimate issue the final entity might be deemed to be possessed

of mind, for consciousness, without an object, is the nature in the Vedanta of the Brahman and even of Puruṣa in the Sāṁkhya. This hymn is the finest effort of the imagination of the Vedic poet, and nothing else equals it." (The Religion & Philosophy of the Veda and Upanishads, pp. 435-437).

## नासदीय सूक्त

१–७ प्रजापतिः परमेष्ठी । भाववृत्तम् । त्रिष्टुप् ।

नासदासीन्नो सदासीत्तदानीं नासीद्रजो नो व्योमा परो यत् ।
किमावरीवः कुह कस्य शर्मन्नम्भः किमासीद्गहनं गभीरम् ॥१॥
न मृत्युरासीदमृतं न तर्हि न रात्र्या अह्न आसीत्प्रकेतः ।
आनीदवातं स्वधया तदेकं तस्माद्धान्यन्न परः किं चनास ॥२॥
तम आसीत्तमसा गूह्लमग्रेऽप्रकेतं सलिलं सर्वमा इदम् ।
तुच्छ्येनाभ्वपिहितं यदासीत्तपसस्तन्महिनाजायतैकम् ॥३॥
कामस्तदग्रे समवर्ततधि मनसो रेतः प्रथमं यदासीत् ।
सतो बन्धुमसति निरविन्दन्हृदि प्रतीष्या कवयो मनीषा ॥४॥
तिरश्चीनो विततो रश्मिरेषामधः स्विदासी ३ दुपरिस्विदासी ३ त् ।
रेतोधा आसन्महिमान आसन्त्स्वधा अवस्तात्प्रयतिः पुरस्तात् ॥५॥
को अद्धा वेद क इह प्र वोचत्कुत आजाता कुतइयं विसृष्टिः ।
अर्वाग्देवा अस्यविसर्जनेनाथा को वेद यत आ बभूव ॥६॥
इयं विस्टष्टिर्यत आ बभूव यदि वा दधे यदि वा न ।
यो अस्याध्यक्षः परमे व्योमन्त्सो अङ्ग वेद यदि वा न वेद ॥७॥

## EPILOGUE

## [ नमोवाक ]

The Summer School closed with the ceremony of recitation of Vedic hymns from the Saṁhitās :—

(1) Ṛigveda.—Pt. Viswanath Deva and Balkrishna Bhatta Sapre recited the Agni-sūkta (I. 1), Indra-sukta (II. 12), Dākshāyaṇī-sūkta (X. 72), Nāsadīya-sūkta (X. 129).

(2) Yajurveda—Shri Krishna Godse, Amarnath Jaitli and Gopal Chandra Shastri recited Adhyāya 32 (Tadevāgni-Upanisad) and Ā-brahman mantras.

(3) Taittirīya-śākhā—Pt. Somnath Ganesh Bapat and Ramachandra Barkare recited the Purusha-sūkta in Saṁhitā-pāṭha and 15 mantras appertaining to Dakṣiṇā of Soma-yajña in Krama-pāṭha.

(4) Kāṇva-Yajurveda—Pt. Lakshmi Kant Pauranik and Balaji Pethkar recited the Īśopaniśad according to the Krama and Pada recitations

(5) Sāmaveda—Pt. Nand Krishna Nagar and Sumati Ram Nagar chanted the Setu-sāma and the Rathantara-sāma.

(6) Atharvaveda—Pt. Rama Chandra Athavale and Bhaskar Rangappa recited the Prāṇa-sūkta and the Rudra-sūkta.

I am now happy to be able to present the Proceedings of the first Summer School of Vedic Studies in a printed form, although delayed owing to my illness. I feel grateful to Shri Chintamani Deshmukh the then Chairman of the University Grants Commission who made at my request a grant of Rs. 2,000 to meet the expenses of the School.

The session held in 1960 brought some good results. It created a living interest among members of the University to revive Vedic studies. As a result a proposal to establish a Department of Vedic Studies and Research under me has been duly passed by the Faculty of Arts, and the Academic Council B.H.U., with the following aims and objects:

1. To organise the study of the Vedic Saṁhitās, Brāhmaṇas, and Upanishads.
2. To undertake the work of interpretation of the Vedic Mantras and ritual according to the traditional Indian basis.
3. To examine critically the Vedic writings of modern scholars, both western and Indian.
4. To interpret the symbolism of the Vedic Deities, Metres, Lokas and other cosmogonic data.
5. To prepare for publication Vedic texts with proper exegesis and annotations.
6. To prepare a detailed commentary on the Ṛigveda from the symbolical point of view.

7. To conduct researches on the Vedic material contained in the Purāṇas in general, and on Pauranic legends in particular.
8. To interpret and understand the various institutions of Indian civilization in the light of their Vedic origins.
9. To prepare special Vedic dictionaries with such interpretation and concordance as modern research may require.
10. To undertake tuition work in Vedic literature, and organise courses for Indian and foreign students and Lectures and Summer Schools for the training of scholars of the Vedas.

As auxiliary to the above I have already started Vedic Seminars from August 1961 which continued twice a week up to the end of March, 1962. Besides Professors and students of the B. H. U., several Fulbright scholars and Research Professors from abroad participated in the Seminar. Prof. P. Lavastine of Paris, Prof. Allen Atwell of Cornell University, Ithaca, Mr. Streng of the Department of Religion, Chicago University, Shri Bryski of Poland, Miss Vlasta Pocheiner of Yugoslavia and Miss Alice Boner of Zurich (at present Varanasi) took part and deserve mention. The School restarted functioning as a Weekly Seminar from August 4, 1962, and also has a projected programme of research on the following lines:

(i) A concordance of Vedic and Pauranic deities

together with their detailed interpretation, (ii) a concordance of all the Vidyās in the Ṛigveda and other Vedic literature together with their meanings as accepted in the Indian tradition ; (iii) a dictionary of Indian symbolism as propounded in the Vedas, Brāhmaṇas, Upanisads, Purāṇas, Tantras, Śaiva Āgamas, and Vaishṇava Saṃhitās ; (iv) a survey of Indian religious cults and modes of worship as practised today together with an investigation of their sources and beginnings in the Vedas and Purāṇas ; (v) a comparative study of the principal legends of the Purāṇas and Vedas together with an interpretative study of the myths and legends in the Epics ; (vi) an iconographic dictionary of the Indian gods and goddesses and an interpretation of their symbolical forms.

This work is proposed to be implemented as the activities of the School of Vedic Studies develop in India and also abroad with the cooperation of friends and scholars working in this field.

The next session of the School of Vedic Studies will be held in the coming Puja Vacation commencing from November 1 (शरत् पूर्णिमा) and closing on November 18 (भ्रातृद्वितीया) 1963. Scholars from Universities and academic Institutes in India and abroad are invited kindly to participate.

V. S. AGRAWALA,
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# SAMSKRIT INDEX


अग्निर्जगार तमृचः कामयन्ते अग्निर्जगार तमु सामानि यन्ति ।
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एतद्वै सत्यकाम परं चापरं च ब्रह्म यदोमित्येतदक्षरमिति ।।
Maitrī Up. ६।५ (Page 127)

एतन्मयो वा अयमात्मा वाङ्मयो मनोमयः प्राणमयः,
ŚB. XIV.4.3.10=BU.1.5.3 (Page 15)

एतमेके वदन्त्यग्निं मनुमन्ये प्रजापतिम् ।
इन्द्रमेके परे प्राणमपरे ब्रह्म शाश्वतम् ।। Manu XII. 123 (Page 171)

एते वसवः एते हीदम् सर्वं वासयन्ति ।
ते यदिदं सर्वं वासयन्ते तस्माद् वसवः ।। ŚB. 11,6.3.6 (Page 117)

एष वाऽअश्वमेधो य एष सूर्यः तपति, ŚB. 10.6.5.8 (Page 19)

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एष वै प्रत्यक्षं यज्ञो यत्प्रजापतिः ŚB. 4.3.4.3 (Page 162)

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मनीषिणो मनसा पृच्छतेदु तद् यदध्यतिष्ठद् भुवनानि धारयन् ॥
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सुपर्णो अङ्गसवितुर्गरुत्मान्पूर्वो जातः स उ अस्यानु धर्मं ।
RV. X. 149.3, ŚB. 10.2.2.4 (Page 132)

ग्राम्याख्य पशु—प्रजापतिरकामयत । उभौ लोकावभिजयेयं देवलोकं च मनुष्यलोकं चेति । स एतान्पशूनपश्यद् ग्राम्यांश्चारण्यांश्च । तानालभत, तैरिमौ लोकाववारुन्द्ध ग्राम्यैरेव पशुभिरिमं लोकमवारुन्द्धारण्यैरमुम् । अयं वै लोको मनुष्यलोकोऽयासौ लोको देवलोको यद् ग्राम्यान् पशूनालभत इममेव तैर्लोकं यजमानोऽवरुन्धे यदारण्यानमुं तैः । ŚB. 13.2.4.1

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Maitri Up. 2.6 (Page 177)

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मायोत्सा ते यानि युद्धान्याहुर्नाद्य शत्रुं न नु पुरा युयुत्सः ॥

ŚB. 11.1.6.10 (Page 111)

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श्यावी च यदरुषी च स्वसारौ महद्देवानामसुरत्वमेकम् ॥

RV. 111.55.111 (Page 194)

निद्रागत नारायण, शेषशायी विष्णु

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भोगिशय्यागतः शेते त्रैलोक्यग्रासवृंहितः ॥ विष्णु १।३।२४ (Page 143)

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अतप्ततूर्नंतदामो अश्नुते श्रृतास इद्बहन्तस्तत्समाशत॥

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प्रश्नोतनिषत्—४ (Page 77)

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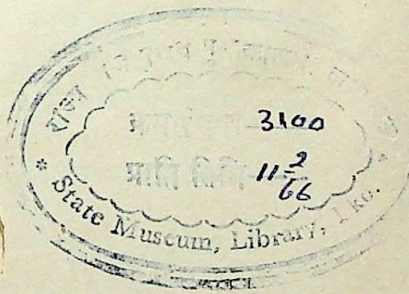

# PUBLICATIONS

The following Vedic literature has been printed or is in the course of publication through the agency of the Director :—

**1. Brahma-Sidhānta (ब्रह्मसिद्धान्त)** by Pt. Madhusudan Ojha, a work on Vedic Metaphysics especially based on the Nāsadīya-sūkta of the Ṛigveda with an Introduction by Dr. V. S. Agrawala. Published in the Nepal Endowment Sanskrit Series of the Hindu University.

**2. Sparks from the Vedic Fire,** being a Study in Vedic Symbolism by Dr. V. S. Agrawala. Published by the Director, School of Vedic Studies, B. H. U.

**3. Vedartha-kalpa-latikā (वेदार्थकल्पलतिका)** by Brahmarshi Daivarata, being an exposition in 1024 Sanskrit verses of the doctrine of Vāk and other hymns of the Ṛigveda. (In B. H. U. Press)

**4. Vaidika Viśva-Darśana (वैदिकविश्वदर्शन)** by Pt. Hari Shankar Joshi, M.A., being a study of Vedic Cosmogony, Philosophy & Symbolism, over 600 pages. (In B.H.U. Press).

**5. Rajovāda (रजोवाद),** by Pt. Madhusudan Ojha, an exposition of the doctrine of *Rajas* or Motion from the Ṛigveda and Brāhmaṇa literature. (In the B.H.U. Press).

**6- Brahma-Vinaya (ब्रह्मविनय),** by Pt. Madhusudan Ojha, being an Introduction to Vedic Exegasis in the light of the Brahma Doctrine. (In the Press).

**7. The Thousand-Syllabled Speech of Vedic Symbolism** ( सहस्राक्षरा वाक् )
by Dr. V. S. Agrawala (under preparation).

**8. The Vision of Dirgha-Tamas or a Commentary on the Asyavāmīya-Sūkta** (I. 164. 1-52) of the Ṛigveda, by Dr. V. S. Agrawala. (Shortly to be published).

**9. The Riddles of Rishi Vasukra** a Symbolical Exposition of Ṛigveda Sūktas X. 27 and X. 28, being published by IsMeo, Rome, Italy.

**10. Agni-Vidyā,** or an Exposition of Ṛigveda I. 1. 1-9, printed in the Bhāratī Bulletin of the College of Indology, Vol. V, B.H.U.

**11. The Symbolism of Two Boilers,** an Exposition of the Gharma-sūkta of the Ṛigveda (X. 114. 1-10.), being published in the Journal of Indology, Visveshwaranand Research Institute, Hoshyarpur.

**12. The Four-horned Bull,** an Exposition of the Symbolism of the Ghrita-sūkta of the Ṛigveda (IV. 58. 1-11), printed in the Munshi Presentation Volume.

**13. Uru-jyoti,** (उरुज्योति, The Great Light), a collection of Vedic Essays by Dr. V.S. Agrawala, Published by the Ramlal Kapoor Trust, Veda-Vānī Office, Varanasi.

**14. Veda-Vidyā** (वेदविद्या), by Dr. V. S. Agrawala, a collection of 27 Vedic Essays published by Ram Prasad & Sons, Agra.

**15. Veda-Raśmi** (वेदरश्मि), a collection of 12 Vedic Essays being published by the Svadhyaya Mandal, Pardi, Surat.